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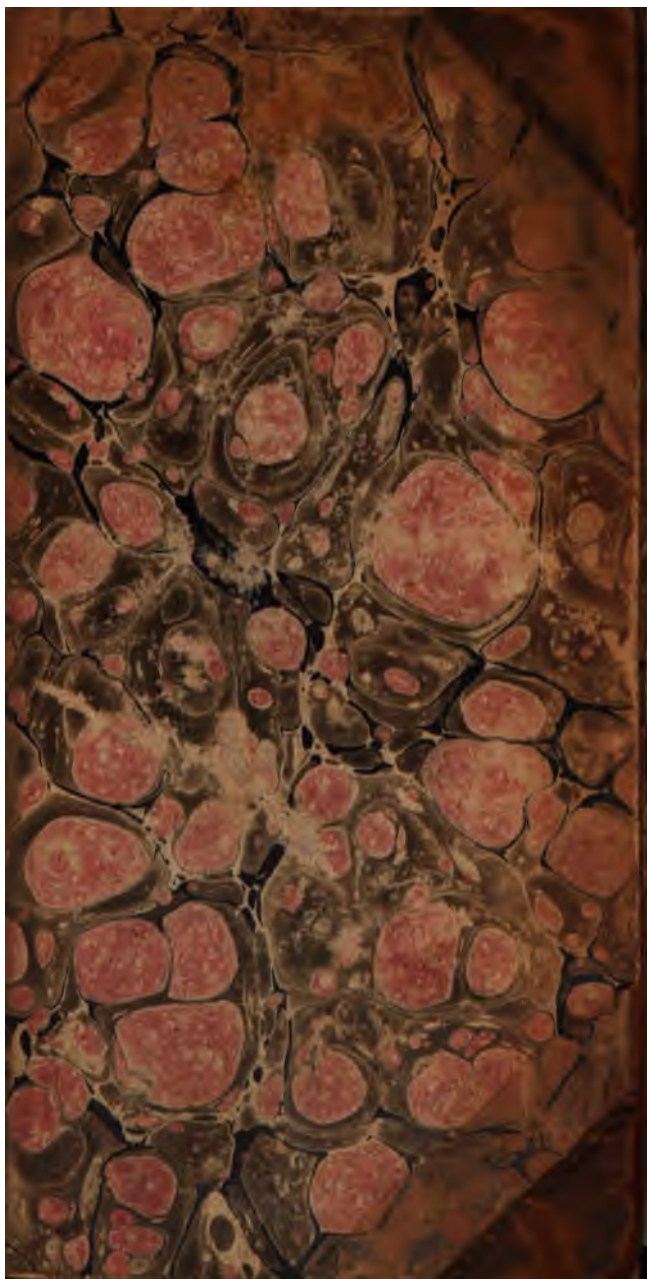
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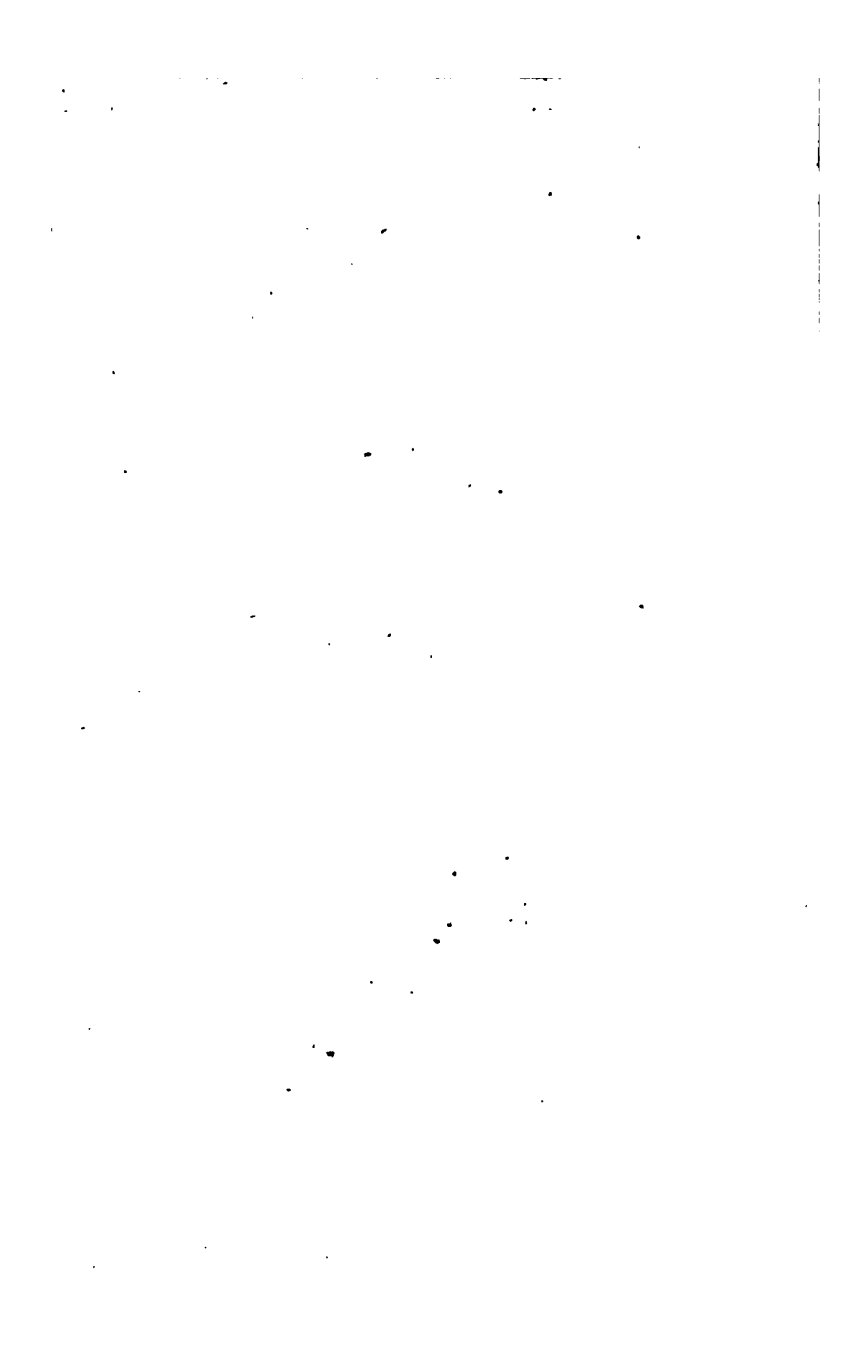


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THE AGE.

A POEM.

IN EIGHT BOOKS.



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PREFACE.

I AM told by a literary friend, that a preface to my poem is “absolutely necessary, were it only for the look of the thing.” I had intended to subjoin a few observations, the end of a volume appearing to me the natural position of a postscript ;—but custom declares otherwise :—be it so.

It may be thought by some, that the part of my poem relating to the great question of civil and religious liberty now under discussion, should have been withheld from the printer ; seeing that glimpses may at last be obtained of the beautiful

basin of peace, into which are being gently drawn by the current of love, the raging waves of faction, bigotry and discord,—there to settle in desirable placidity :—but it should be remembered by the votaries of freedom, that the adverse party, although its gradual decrease be constant, and its occasionally more important defalcations be most glorious, is not an infant but a giant still. The rank, the portion of talent and intellect, and the real power which it possesses, are not to be overlooked with scorn, or defied perhaps altogether with impunity. True, as a periodical writer has beautifully and aptly remarked in reference to it, we must expect to see the heaving of the ocean's bosom, and to hear the sighing of the wind for a time ; after such a tempest it cannot be otherwise ; would to God this may be all ;—it is my wish, my prayer,—but my heart scarcely feels the cheering, delightful influence of hope. The spirit of bigotry, like that of freedom, cannot be crushed by a law ;—there the

similarity terminates ;—the latter, founded on reason, can never have reason for its opponent ; consequently, is eternal : the former, equally opposed to reason and to love, must yield in time before the sunshine of the one, or the earthquake shock of the other. Should my little poem assist the righteous cause, I shall be well content.

“The Age” is not a regularly written poem ; I have had my peculiar avocation to engage my attention ; but my hours of lonely musing have been occupied in looking into the condition of my fellow men, and in noting down my observations on its character and tendency ; these have been written in the language I love,—that of poetry,—and a compilation from them I now present to my countrymen. The above remarks will account for the difference in style which may be observable in contiguous passages ; nevertheless, in arranging the volume and bringing it down to the present time, I have endeavoured, as far as was in my power, to connect the different parts

in a natural link, and to give to the whole an unaffected and unforced appearance. The incidents in the first book, which is principally introductory, may be thought by those who have read "The Course of Time,"—and who has not?—not to be altogether of my own invention. But it was written ere Mr. Pollok's admirable poem was in print ; since I had the delight of reading this, I have materially altered my own ; so much so, that perhaps were it not for the preceding remark, the critic's eye might not have directed inquiry into the origin of my fiction.—One remark more ; —I am conscious that many of my opinions, and probably of my expressions, have been collected from other authors ;—I like not the charge of plagiarism, yet I cannot avoid it by pointing to the fountains whence I have drank ; for I remember them not.—When at the moment of writing, I have been struck with conviction that the phrase is not original, I have owned it as a quotation ; for the rest, I cannot do better than transcribe a

passage from the preface of a justly celebrated authoress :——“I should willingly acknowledge with gratitude those authors who have perhaps supplied me with many expressions and ideas ;—but if I have subjected myself to the charge of plagiarism, it has been by adopting the words or images which floated upon my mind, without accurately examining, or being indeed able to distinguish, whether I owed them to my memory or my imagination.”

THE AUTHOR.

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England! with all thy faults I love thee still,
My country!—and while yet a nook is left,
Where English minds and manners may be found,
Shall be constrained to love thee.

* * * *

To shake thy senate, and from heights sublime
Of patriot eloquence, to flash down fire
Upon thy foes, was never meant my task:
But I can feel thy fortunes, and partake
Thy joys and sorrows, with as true a heart
As any thunderer there. And I can feel
Thy follies too.

Cowper's Task. Book 2nd.

Muse hang this harp upon yon aged beech,
Still murmuring with the solemn truths I teach;
And while at intervals a cold blast sings
Through the dry leaves, and pants upon the strings,
My soul shall sigh in secret; and lament
A nation scourged, yet tardy to repent.
I know the warning song is sung in vain;
That few will hear, and fewer heed the strain;
But if a sweeter voice and one designed
A blessing to my country and mankind,
Reclaim the wandering thousands, and bring home
A flock so scattered, and so wont to roam;
Then place it once again between my knees;
The sound of truth will then be sure to please;
And truth alone, where'er my life be cast,
In scenes of plenty or the pining waste,
Shall be my chosen theme, my glory to the last.

Cowper's Exposition.

THE AGE.

A Poem.

BOOK I.

AWAKE, awake my soul, rouse all thy pow'rs
From lethargy ignoble, nor permit
Thy reason, gift divine, to waste its youth
And youthful vigour, slumbering in the arms—
Withering, pale, yet fondly circling arms
Of fascinating melancholy ;—call
Him from th' enchanted bed, and bid him rise
In more than pristine energy renew'd ;
Bathe him in the deep waters of the fount
Of holy Contemplation, and array

Him in the garments light and soft of Love,
Pure, heav'nly love ;—then lead him thro' the paths
So blest, of Virtue, where he may collect
The fairest flow'rs of cultivated Fancy
T'adorn his temples, and pluck golden fruit
To satisfy his craving appetite
From off the vine of Truth ; that heav'nly tree,
Whose taste, discernment gives, infallible,
Of good and evil, “ substance and false shadow.”
Thus beautified and freshened, let him sing
A tributary song sincere, a song
Not all unworthy of his heav'nly birth.

And thou, my harp, assist, and in a strain
Of swelling harmony, the theme prolong ;
A theme more noble, and befitting thee
More justly far, than aught which on thy strings
Hath lingered ; whether it be cold Remorse,
Corroding Disappointment, Solitude
With pensive front, Contentment calm, serene,
Stern Hate, death-like Despair, or even Love—
Fond, fervent, youthful Love. Thee, I awake,

That with thy music, Truth, firm, rigid Truth,
May find an entrance to the heart. The Age
To sing I purpose ; with its character,
Its virtues, vices, signs, realities,
And vain pretensions,—chiefly as relate
To thee, O Britain, isle beloved, my home,
My country,—all thy strings to make resound.
Be ductile and propitious then, my harp ;
That should I seek a softened note, or wish
To strike a higher key, or,—if my breast
Much wounded, glow with indignation's fire,—
Should need thy loudest, most exalted tones
To sound an awful warning, and to bear
Witness against an age of fools and crime,
Ever be free to my desire, and weave
A labyrinth of melody, or roll
Concordant peals of thunder, long and loud.

Jehovah ! Lord of truth, who art alone
Mighty and wise, my Father's and my God,
Hear thou my pray'r. With wisdom fill my soul,
And truth and knowledge ; open thou mine eyes

And brighten my perception ; and mine ear
Unstop, and give it understanding ; warm
With zeal for thee, my heart ; with sympathy
And kindest love, and true benevolence
Towards my fellows ; that I may exalt
Thy glory, O my God ; and should my song
Strike mortal ears, Oh ! let it reach the heart.

Guide thou my hand, Jehovah !—and the breath
Of thine own spirit, waft across my harp.
Inspire my touch, and let my fingers thread
A maze of sounds as ravishing and sweet
As ever flowed from harps of angels. Asks
My tongue too much, forgive me, O my God.
And if on wing too venturesome, my muse
Shall scale the pure serene, to catch a glimpse
Of heav'n and heav'nly bliss, still pardon me,
My God, my Father, nor thy presence blest
Withdraw.

Hear thou in heav'n, thy dwelling-place,
And when thou hearest, answer and forgive,
And do ; defer not O my God, my trust.

Like as a note, deep, heav'nly musical,
That seems to linger in a constant swell
Of melody, yet quivering the while,—
Like as a note thus blest, enchants the heart
Of him, the lone performer, that he fears
As 'twere, to lose it, tho' full well he knows
Another touch will wake a chord of sounds
Still more sublime in pathos, of more full
Expression,—so, in ecstasy of bliss,
Within a grove planted by God's own hand
And watered by heaven's dews,—while all around,
Thousands of feather'd songsters tuned their pipes,
Warbling their happiness ; and every fruit
And every flower grateful to the sense
Of spirits in their highest glory, hung
Tempting and rich, or lovely strew'd the green
So beautiful, or twisted up the stems
Of the firm laurel, peering thro' its leaves
Young in eternal freshness ;—in this grove,
Trembling in such an ecstasy of bliss,
Wandered Theresa,—such her name on earth.
Yes, pure and perfect as her spirit was

In heaven, breathed upon and clothed anew
By God, its Maker, she had spent on earth
A fleeting visit. As I have beheld
A gentle snow-drop raise its timid head
From a rude thicket's midst; and look so pure,
So virgin-like, so lovely, that I've gazed
With joy upon its beauty, and have wish'd
To gaze for ever :—but there rose a wind,
A cold, a wintry wind, that blew upon
And pierced its breast defenceless ; and its head
Bowed to the blast, submissive ; and its stem,
Feeble support, from the rude touch recoil'd,
And sickly grew ;—at even, all was dead :—
Thus with Theresa ;—just had she attained
The bloom of beauty, promising a length
Of days,—while Piety sincere, and Love,
Fervent and universal, seemed to spread
A halo of bright glory all around
Her person,—when Consumption, ghastly spectre,
Moistened her with her mildew'd breath malign,
And poisoned all her life-springs ;—and her head
She bowed submissive, while her feeble frame

Shrank to a shadow in the arms of death :
But for her spirit, angel choirs were waiting
To waft it far from earth and all below.
Borne on their downy pinions through the fields
Of subtle air, and far above the hills,
Th' eternal hills that bound heav'n's wide domain,
Amidst a chorus of th' angelic host,
Sang to the lofty sound of their own harps
Divine, at length she reached the throne of God.
Perfection now was her's, of holiness,
Liberty, wisdom, happiness and love ;
And by the voice of God, Jehovah's self,
Omnipotent, was she proclaimed aloud,
A citizen of heaven ;—and was hailed
With holy greeting, to the fellowship
Of angels and of saints. Forth from the throne,
God's more immediate presence, she retired,
Dazzled with excess of glory, and oppressed
With love transcendant. Eagerly she sought
Some holy solitude, from whence her soul,
Immortal praise to heav'n's eternal king
Might offer. To the grove she wandered ; there

She breathed her gratitude, and there received
Full joy from God the Spirit.

And the grove
Thus early blest, became her chief resort
For sacred meditation. Day and night
There witnessed her devotion, and beheld
The fervour of her love; from thence her songs
Ascended to Jehovah, who, well-pleased,
Approved her service; and from this loved spot,
Her eye would cast a frequent, anxious glance
On earth below, on friends once dear, still dear,
Still fondly loved. But most of all beloved,
And dearer than all others, was there one,
A brother, who on earth was bound by ties
Of sympathy, affection, like pursuits
And wishes, mortal loves and hopes of bliss
Fadeless, immortal, to her gentle heart.

Nor bounded was her heart, though of its love
Her Lucius held a share so large; for all
Who claimed her nature, claimed an entrance there,
And were admitted; chiefly, as was right,

Her kindred, and of them her Lucius filled
The widest, warmest space : they two were one
And now in heaven, though she often wept
Tears of compassion for a world enslav'd
By sin and sorrow,—for that saints can weep
In bliss, soft pity weep, the heav'nly muse,
Sought with much pray'r and fervent in a night
Of holy meditation, lone and sweet,
Whispers my spirit,—still on Lucius most
She fondly lingered. Often would her eye,
Humid and glowing, dwell upon his steps,
And with a deep anxiety peruse
His words and actions and his inmost heart.
And wishful was her spirit for the hour
Of endless meeting, whence their happy souls
Secure from parting, should, through all the roll
Of vast eternity, united, praise
The mercy of their wonder-working God.
That hour at length arrived ; Death, with his dart,
Most welcome to the victim, cut the thread
That bound him to Earth's regions, and set free
Th' immortal spirit from its robes of clay.

And angel choirs were waiting to receive
And waft it on their downy pinions, through
The fields of subtle air, and far above
The hills, th' eternal hills, to the bright throne
Of God Almighty ; before whom, 'midst songs
Of joy, and chorus swelling to the sounds
Of harps divinely tuned, it prostrate fell.

Thrilling within her grove, with holy bliss,
Meanwhile Thetesa wandered ;—like the note,
Ling'ring harmonious on the grateful ear,
So seemed her rapture ; and tho' well she knew
The presence of her brother would increase
This rapture to a measure overflowing,
She could not dare to seek him. O ! 'twas joy
Unbounded, infinite, yet still extending !

Thus dwelt she in her transport ; while far off
In the most holy place, her brother's soul
Was justified, and cleansed, and perfect made,—
Perfect in all perfection,—and enroll'd
Amidst the ranks of the celestial host.

Accomplish'd ev'ry rite, a golden crown
Blooming with life immortal, and a harp,
A heav'n-toned harp, were giv'n him by the hand
Of God himself. The harp, the seraph seized
In all the ardour of his zeal uncheck'd,
And with a touch inspir'd by love divine,
Roll'd its loud numbers thro' heav'n's infinite,
While with a voice melodious, thus he sang :

“ Glory to God, Jehovah ! glory, praise
And honour everlasting, and all might,
All majesty, dominion, pow'r and love,
Be unto Him alone ascribed ; to Him,
The mighty Lord, the Great I Am,
The Alpha and Omega, Him, the First,
The Last, the End and the Beginning, God
Supreme, Creation's Lord, the Life, the Light,
And Beauty of the worlds he made, Heav'n's Joy,
And Happiness, Hell's Arbiter and Judge,
Earth's Monarch, Man's Redeemer, Father, Son,
And Holy Ghost, Essential, Matchless Love.”

How shall I name thee, Mighty King? how speak
Of all thine attributes? On earth, my soul
Longed to possess a Seraph's tongue, to feel
A Seraph's glow, that I might justly tell
Of all thy wonders, O my God. But tongue
Of Seraph, though inflam'd by heav'n's own fire,
Unequal, I confess, to speak thy praise.
The more I learn of thee, the less I know;
The higher I ascend in the true scale
Of wisdom, far beyond, thy love appears,
Higher and wider ever spreading, lost
In boundless, measureless infinity.

Aid me thyself, Jehovah! guide my hand
Along the wires celestial, and my tongue
Inspire with thine own poetry divine,
While I attempt thy glory to rehearse,
As best I may; forgive me where I fail.
But where shall I commence, and what of Thee
Who knowest no commencement, shall my song
First utter?—Shall I tell thy truth?—The Rock
Of Ages everlasting, is the Word—

The Promise of a God.—Thy Holiness?—
Thou art the King of Saints, nor can Thine eye
Of purest fire, behold iniquity.
Shall I declare thy Wisdom?—'Tis a Sea,
O God! Unfathomable, Infinite,
Omniscient, Omnipresent, failing not.
How shall I speak Thy Power, Almighty King,
Omnipotent?—Bear witness, lowest hell,
To its extent;—and tell His Justice too.
But for His Love and Mercy, O my soul,
Them shouldest thou relate, for thou hast felt
Their kindly power;—but my spirit fails
To grasp the vast idea, unconceived
And past conception,—never told, because
Unspeakable by mens' and angels' tongues.
Then raise thyself, the theme, Jehovah; tell
Thy love, how grand, unsearchable, profound;—
Or rather, tell it not, but deign t'exert
Its essence, and withhold the wondrous story,
Lest overwhelm'd, I sink to rise no more;
For Gods alone should hear, when Godhead speaks.

Now strike your harps, ye angel-choirs, and you
Ye seraph-saints, in a grand chorus join
Your sweetest accents to my hymn of praise."—

Thus he ; and as a flood of many waters
Bursting their barriers, rolls the sparkling waves
O'er the smooth meadows with a torrent's force,
So burst the music from the angels' harps
Excited, and through heaven's arch'd concave rang.—
Earth heard the sound, and echoed back a strain
Of soften'd harmony ; heard too the air
And timid, fluttered in her joy ; and hell
Heard also, and a deep, despairing groan
Responded ;—while the ear of God well-pleased,
Listened, delighted with the holy song,
Fit organ of his creatures' gratitude.

And now a cloud of balmy, sweet perfume
Descended from His throne ; and from the sight
Of seraphs and archangel, dazzled, veiled
The splendour of his glory ; awful sign,

That to His Spirit's blest communion, God,
Unseen by any, purposed to retire.

The holy ranks disbanded, and withdrew,
Each where his pleasure led him ;—some to pray
And praise, and meditate on love Divine ;
Others to hold sweet converse, or to sing
Songs of the heav'nly Zion ;—or to watch
The actions of a world of sin and woe ;
While Lucius,—thus the muse directs me still
To name him, sought his sister's spirit pure,
And sought not long in vain ; for souls in heaven
An impulse strong, intuitive, perceive,
Prompting whate'er they wish ;—and in the grove
Where still Theresa lingered, was his joy
Rendered complete.—But be thou still, my harp,
Nor vainly strive a seraph's bliss too full
To reach, when even seraphs' harps
Fail to give utt'rance to the mighty whole.

Bathing in rapture while a day and night
Revolved, remained they,—heaven's day and night,—

Such night, such day,—where the eternal splendour
Of all the brightness of God's countenance
Dwells with unfading glory, never hid.
Such is a night in heaven ; myriads of suns,
That sparkle through the day, proclaiming wide
The great Creator's power as they roll
Eternally transcendant round his throne,
May, in an infinite variety
Of perfect beauty, be concealed awhile ;
But light is never absent, perfect light
Essential and supreme, compared to which,
All other lights are darkness, and the blaze
Of worlds of suns, is but a glow-worm's ray.

Thus heaven's day and night, and thus the Age
In heaven, varied with all holy bliss,
Yet still the same, transporting, endless love.

The Age in heaven !—O thou God of love !
And have I then presumed to raise mine eye,
My feeble thoughts, to where thine honour dwells
In glory inaccessible, and light

Unrivalled?—dared to speak the joys
Thou givest, therefore past conception, far
Beyond my understanding?—O my God,
Pardon thy dust's presumption, kindle not
Thy vengeful wrath against me, nor withhold
The presence of thy life-imparting spirit,
While I attune to other song, my lyre.

The Age in heaven!—What the Age in hell?
Speak it who can,—my tongue rejects the theme,
And motionless and mute my harp-strings stand.
Repeat hell's horrors?—venture to describe
What baffles all description, woe, woe, woe—
Illimitable, quenchless, without end?
Tell, ye who know its torments, groan aloud
Its malice, pride, revenge implacable,
Hatred, remorse, lust, envy, cruelty,
And last, and most of all, its wild despair.
Another, and another groan, repeat
In mercy,—mercy? devils know it not,—
That men may hearken and be wise to flee
From wrath to come, and never feel the fire

Unquenchable, the gnawings of the worm
That dieth not, whose hunger knows no end ;
And never join the self-condemning moans,
The curses blasphemous, the gnashing teeth,
The weeping and the wailing ; never know
What 'tis to dare the justice of a God,
Abuse his mercy and defy his power.
But would they then believe ? Alas ! the ears
That scorn to listen to the gospel's voice,
Which bids them now repent, believe and live,—
Or hearing, scorn to practise what they hear,
Would still be deaf, even to the voice of hell,
Or think it all a dream.

My harp, forbear !
For melancholy is the theme, and sad
The vast reflections that enclose it round.
Come, raise again thy notes to heav'n, and sing
What pass'd, the first effusions of their joy
Escap'd the happy spirits in the grove,
Mingling in all the ecstasy of love.

“ Theresa,” thus began the younger born,

" All sorrow,—praises to Almighty God,
Hath vanished now for ever. For this hour,
How hath my spirit long'd ; how pictured oft,
Till fancy failed, the pleasure in reserve.
Peace I expected ; calmer than the brook
We used t' admire as it glided on
So softly, by our fav'rite summer seat ;
Yes, more serene, ev'n than the evening star
Reposing undisturb'd on the soft bed
Of the blue ether ;—but the peace I feel
Pervading all my spirit, far exceeds
My highest expectations, fondest hopes.
'Tis rather like the slumber, soft and peaceful
Of infant, cradled on its Mother's breast ;
So seems to press on God, my spirit ; so
Reclines, affection breathing, smiling joy,
Upon his love. It is the peace of God."

" It is the peace of God," was whispered round
By the smooth zephyrs, while a rich perfume,
More exquisite than spicy Eastern gales,
Or Persian ottar's more luxurious breath,

Filled, though invisible, the grateful air.
“ This is the peace of God, my brother, past
All understanding,” in the softest tone
Echoed the sister spirit; “ and the thought
That it is endless, far beyond the power
Of creature to diminish, swells the joy.
Earth oft was pleasant, sweet in hopes and loves,
And friendships tender, and remembrances
Of past delights and sorrows ; but a worm
Fed ever at the root; uncertainty
Of long duration spread a sullen gloom,
A spotted tarnish o’er the best it gave.”

“ Death, after all, my sister, was the source
Of purest happiness that earth could yield.
Sure was its coming, and the eye of faith,
Beyond the grosser things of time and sense,
Soaring far off, and fixing on its God,
Could, even in life’s bloom, when naught of death
Was seen, but a vain shadow as a speck
In the horizon,—could, and did convey
A kindly foretaste of hereafter joy

And happiness, to the believer's heart.
My soul at least, hath often realized
In part, the bliss of heaven, thus employ'd.
O yes ! 'twas passing sweet to muse and watch
The spirit's flight from earth, its rise to heav'n,
Its meeting thee, my sister, on the hills
Of the eternal City—"

" Such I meant,"

Theresa softly whispered ; " but my soul
Was full, too full, too happy with the near,
The joyful prospect of beholding thee.
Oh ! I had pray'd and long'd that the blest hour
Soon might arrive, when I should know thee safe
On Canaan's shores ; but years flew swiftly by,
Our parents came, and one beloved friend
Succeeded fast another, all but thee :
At length thou camest, but my excited soul,
Amidst a flow of so much rapture whelm'd,
And gratitude, sank prostrate to adore
His love, who all had giv'n to me, unworthy
Of any favour. Could I then have led
Thee unto Him, my brother, and, unveiled,

Have seen the splendour of his glory, seen
His Majesty?—I surely had not lived
To meet thee here in all our happiness.

But tell me, Lucius,—for on earth thine age
Numbered threescore and ten, mine, twenty suns,—
Both were now blooming in immortal youth,—
“ What changes time hath wrought below,—on earth
What has befallen through these fifty years.
Or rather, tell the grand result, the end,
The consequence of all these changes vast :
How much mankind are wiser, more allured
By true, pure wisdom, solid happiness ;—
Less caught away by a vain, glittering show
Of folly and corruption ; more devote
To virtue, piety, and God. Thy harp
Attune, my brother, precious gift divine,
And sing the wonders of the Age on earth.
For pleasing more it is to hear thy voice
Rehearse the story, than to fix the eye
On earth, how fair soever she may be,
And close observe what passes ;—and my hours

Since that I've dwelt in heaven, have been spent
In praising God and watching over thee,
Dear Lucius, with affection's anxious glance :
So that of man's concerns and character,
As changed by fifty years, I nothing know ;
Not even of dear Albion, land beloved,
Where often we have wandered, and to which,
Chiefly I would direct thy holy song."

He smiled, but smiled with sadness, and replying,
" To answer what thou seek'st, I can't but strive,
Though mournful is the tale, of other sort
Than thy pure spirit fancies ;—such alas !
Is man unsanctified by grace Divine,
Guided alone by his own will corrupt."
He took his harp, and drew a plaintive strain,
Mild as the summer-morning's early breeze.

BOOK II.

LIKE as a timid bird, that from the top
Of some tall monument, regards with care
The fearful deep beneath, and hops about,
Musing, it may be, whence it shall descend,—
So for a short-lived space the seraph dwelt
In silence, pondering his thoughts sublime ;
While ever and anon there rose a strain
Simple, irregular, tho' softly sweet
In harmony, from off his lyre divine :.
At length he struck a loftier note, and join'd, 10
Pensive at first, then swelling loud, his voice—

“ How fair soever be our Mother, Earth,”—
Thou said'st,—and fair and lovely was her frame
Created, and remains so still, bedeck'd
With all that can increase the happiness
Of her vicegerent, Man. Rocks, mountains, hills,
Oceans, lakes, rivers, brooks, the fertile plain,
The beauteous valley, flow'ry bank, the dell
All woody, grove retir'd, sun, moon, and stars,
Fresh rain and heav'nly dew, and ev'ry fruit
And ev'ry flow'r, and moss, and shrub, and tree,
Beasts, birds and fishes,—all to man were giv'n
To make him happy, and him teach t' adore
The great Creator. And himself was made
Fair too, and lovely ; in all beauty fair,
In virtue lovely ; lovely so and fair,
That God pronounc'd him good. Alas ! Man good !
How are the mighty fallen, and the strong
In heart, disheartened, and the proud, abased.
How are the mighty fallen ! Pure, most pure,
They chose defilement ; beautiful, they marred
Themselves their beauty,—innocent, they touched
Of their own will, the thing unclean,—

Lovely, chose hate ; and virtuous, wedded vice,—
Godlike in spirit, sought a devil's heart. 35
How are the mighty fallen !—Angels fell,
And man pursued, unwarned by angels' fate ;
Yes, angels fell, but prior was their fall
To scenes of punishment, to groans of hell :
That “ God all mercy were a God unjust,” 40
True, they acknowledged ; but to them, the wrath
Of God's eternal Justice, was unknown.
Man fell with double light,—convinced, assured
That Truth and Justice, and his God, were one.

How are the mighty fallen ! how they fall ! 45
Like corn in harvest, sinking at the stroke
Of the sharp sickle, so their spirits sink,—
But sink to hell,—devoted by the scythe
Of the just vengeance of insulted God.
Day calleth unto day, and night to night 50
Declares his power, and reveals fresh scenes
Of horror and fresh sights of woe, prepared
For all who scorn his mercy, and reject
His proffer'd grace ;—yet man still scorns, rejects,

Nay more, uplifts his puny arm against 66
 His God, his King. Then wonder, O ye heavens!
 Earth, be amazed, astounded!—and thou, hell!
 Laugh in thy joy, and revel in thy sport!
 Man still may gain a heav'n, yet comes to thee;
 Comes of his own free will, with swiftness comes, 67
 Outstripping love Divine, that strives to save.
 How are the mighty fallen! yet the Age
 That lives on earth is as its fathers were;
 Is, as they were, rebellious, but informed,
 Enlightened and illuminated more. 68
 Tell IT that it is fallen;—and the cry
 Responsive is,—“The march of intellect!”
 The march of pride, I call it, that converts
 All wisdom gained, to utter foolishness,
 All sense to madness, and to darkness, light. 70

'Twas pride made war in heav'n,—that founded hell,
 That ruined man, that made a Saviour bleed!—
 Pride was the monster fabled, that let loose
 On earth, all other sin.—Despair and hate,
 Murder and rapine, violence and lies, 76

To man his equal, never ought to pay.
All honour to whom honour shall be due ;——
And kings, as God's appointed to command
The nations, should with rev'rence be beheld ;
But never should a worm of earth receive
Such marks profound of low obeisance, such
Homage and adoration fit for God ;—
One should not dare receive, the other pay.

Again, their titles ; not content with pow'r
And plenitude of vast dominion, pride
Arrogates lofty words to swell its state ;
Granted, to man, weak, airy, senseless words,
And whose true import God alone can claim ;
Then what is God's, man should not touch profane.

Pride governs in the council, pride of place,
Deputed pow'r, official arrogance.
See how he struts, the creature of a day,
Prime fav'rite of a fallen man ;—like king,
Like servant ;—how he views the office badge
With greedy jealousy, tho' still his eye

Will ever and anon glance all around, 115
With solemn and mysterious meaning big.
What seems to say his spirit? "I am He
On whose almighty will, the fate of Kings
And nations is depending;—at my nod,
Destruction fills the globe, and when I raise 120
My finger, all is peace. To me and mine,
Princes and pow'rs pay homage, and of me
Solicit friendship. Stand ye off, ye crowd,
Nor dare pollute my presence; your advice
And offered aid I seek not; my resolves, 125
To me are fully known, nor can your minds
Dive into the unfathomable deep.
Bow then before my wisdom, and admire
My hidden counsels;—what I will, I will!"

Alas! poor man! who does not pity? who 130
Could bear up such a weight of majesty?
Poor, weak, vain, foolish man! he little knows
That all his wisdom hath not taught his soul
To know itself. O could he see himself
As others see him, he would find his pow'r 135

A boasted phantom, a delusive dream ;
 In its true light his silence would appear,—
 Sheer ignorance,—his glory, all a puff,—
 His pride his ruin, and himself his God.

Him copies close the magistrate ;—too oft 140
 A villain with as hard a heart of stone
 As had Egyptian Pharaoh ; and like him
 Bloated with pride and swollen big with power.
 O pride of office !—Man with heart imbued
 With human feelings, humble would become, 145
 Not haughty at the sight of so much sin,—
 And not austere, but mild to sufferers.
 The duties of the office, justice stern,
 Must be fulfilled, 'tis true ;—but Oh ! the voice
 Might softened be, as easily as proud, 150
 And arrogant, and pompous ;—and the eye
 Might glisten with compassion for the grief,
 And sorrow for the fault, as well as stare
 With haughty boldness, consciously secure ;
 And then the heart might whisper where it 155
 could,
 A plea for Mercy, punishment less hard ;

And not feel pleasure in awarding doom
The utmost of the rigours of the law.

Like him is seen the lordly overseer,
Intended primarily as the priest 160
Of mercy, and the Father of the poor,
But now become their tyrant and their scourge.
'Tis true, the real evil he performs,
The other's far from equals;—but the pride
Of heart, the haughty will is just the same. 165

Pride reigns too, in the senate, if that name
Can still be given to the motley crowd
Who form its ranks,—the half more fit to learn.
And yet on earth, 'tis called the choice select,
Of all the wisdom, virtue, excellence, 170
And talents of the nation. And in truth
It may be so; but more's the pity, more
The shame that wisdom is so scant, so rare
Is virtue, excellence so far from good,
Talents so wasted and so misapplied. 175
All countries are the same, but Britain's light
So far superior, where the gospel's sun

Has burn'd so long and brightly, one would think
 Had purified her senate, and redeemed
 Her from the sweeping charge;—far otherwise 110
 The Truth. Bear witness, Oh, ye echoing roofs,
 And you, ye walls, repeat the tart reply,
 The angry taunt, foul Slander's whisper, oaths
 Half-spoken, curses muttered, and,—Oh, worse
 Than all,—repeat it not,—the name of God, 115
 The three-times holy name of God, abused
 By light appeals, and heartless reverence.
 Gather it up ye winds, and waft away
 The stigma, the reproach from British isles.
 The wisdom of the nation !—then the wise 120
 Are wise in their own foolishness ; “ the world
 By wisdom knows not God ; ”—and all through pride.

Nor has the bar escaped ; its flippant wit,—
 Its argument protracted past the bounds
 Of pleasure, sense, and patience,—sharp retort, 125
 Satirical invective, and its loud
 Infallible and positive decrees,—
 All show the temper of the soul within.

Pride too in Mercy's artists oft appears.
Is Mercy's mild dominion in the soul 244
So easily usurped, that even they,
Her chosen messengers, cast off the rule,
And to her vacant throne raise rebel Pride?
Alas, 'tis true!—I watched a sick man's bed
With other friends attentive;—'twas the hour 245
For the physician's visit, and he came;
But to our anxious queries, deign'd reply
By talking of his merits, and relating
His past adventures, not uninterspers'd
With language fitter for a drunkard's board 246
Than Death's stern presence.—When I inter-
posed
With indignation roused, he sagely rubbed
His head, and told me that he came to teach
And practise, not to learn. At length, the case,
He said was desperate:—but when advice 247
Of others was proposed, he flounced about
In high disorder, saying, “where was placed
No confidence, assistance was in vain.”
He left,—another came,—my friend was dead.

Think not all like this picture;—some 220
 There are who heal the smart with tenderness
 And sympathy, that they may practise love;
 And some, whose art the sickly frame to cure
 Is far exceeded, by their care divine
 To heal the wounded spirit,—who can pour 225
 Sweet balm of consolation in the soul
 Of the afflicted, raise the drooping heart,
 Strengthen the weak, and moderate the fervent.
 But though some members may be healthy, pride
 Infects the larger mass. The hearts they gain, 230
 Frequent, of those they tend, and then abuse
 The confidence thus plac'd, t' insure their skill.

Pride fills the earth, is the besetting sin,
 The ruling passion of the Age;—but still
 It lurks more fondly, and more constant seems 235
 In company with some professions; one
 Most full of its vain emptiness, yet proud
 Of its possession, and most loathe the sin
 To banish, is the army; to whose ranks
 Men flock in crowds, infatuated, dazzled 240

By shew and pageantry, and deeds of blood.
I said, that here pride fondly lurked ;—how strange,
How passing strange ! when every drop of blood
They witness,—and they see no little shed,—
Proclaims aloud, man's weakness and his fall. 247
How passing strange,—when ev'ry beauteous field,
And ev'ry tree, and fruit, and flower, despoiled
By them of all their loveliness, in tones
Plaintive but piercing, whisper to their hearts,
“ It was not so in Paradise, when pride 250
Of man was not ;—but Pride, ere long shall fall.”
How passing strange ! when beaming from each eye
That dying, lingers still to glance around,
Are seen unearthly fires, whose light displays
Deep lines of passion, hatred, and revenge 255
Imprinted, where once towered haughtiest pride.
How passing strange ! —when to the widowed wife
And orphan children, goes the victor friend
Of him, the husband and the father once,—
Now gone for ever——strange, how passing strange, 260
That when their flowing tears, and groans that burst
Their inmost spirit strike upon his sense,

Displaying misery produced from pride,
His heart should still within him bound, for he
Of all the proudest, is esteemed most proud ! 265
'Tis passing strange, but not more strange than true.

And what then is this pride, this gaudy thing
Tickling men's fancies, holding such command
Over their souls, that, like the fated wretch
Infatuated by the serpent's glare 270
To his destruction,—so they gaze upon
Its splendid tinsel, giddy, unaware
That ever it approaches, ever gains
Over them more dominion, and will gain,
Till they are crushed between the jaws of death ? 275
What is this pride that steals away the hearts
The boldest in the land ? Is it because
They are the boldest, therefore are they proud ?
That should, methinks, effect another change,
And make them still more humble, and their
 hearts 280
Soften with gratitude, and bow to Him
Who by a word, can wither up their strength.

Or are they proud because to them 'tis given
To fight their country's battles, and to save
From foreign tyranny, their much loved land ?
Who serves his country best, I answer,—he
Whose pride occasioned war, and then begirt
Himself with armour to prevent her ruin ;—
Or he whose tempered meekness held the fight
At distance, and whose pray'rs to God above,
Prolonged the peace, and suffered not to fall
His country's sons ?—

Or granted that the first
Was not the battle's author,—but when sounds
And rumours of approaching war were heard,
He left his home for her to win or die,—
Still, was his service to the country, equal
To his who strove destruction to prevent,
And strong in Christian courage, owned the fault
That threatened war, and thus continued peace ?
To triumph nobly in a righteous cause
Is worthy, though a stream of blood be shed ;
But to prevent that stream from ever flowing,
Is nobler far, more righteous, worthier still.

Blessed, thrice blessed are the bonds of peace,
And blessed they who make them,—sons of God ! 125

This is the picture's fairest ;—but observe
The other side, look closely, view it well ;
And what then is this pride ?—In some, a love
Of show and pomp, or pow'r despotic, love
Of ruling others with an iron rod ; 310
Or 'tis a pride of strength and prowess, pride
Of achieving feats of valour and of arms,—
Heedless alas ! that for each beating pulse
A fellow mortal dies. And some feel proud
Through a vague fancy that the army's ranks 315
Contain the brightest honour, of which thing
It is the fountain head, the grand depôt.
And what is honour ? that I mean which man,
Poor, foolish man thinks honour ? Is it truth ?
Oh no, he calls the fellow brute who does 320
His utmost to secure his death, his friend,—
And calls himself a man, a gentle man ;
Truth ? when his friend he cheated with the dice,—
Then, rather than confess the theft, and seek
Forgiveness, vows to heav'n his play was fair, 325

And to th' Omnipotent presumes to appeal
 In confirmation of the lie? This, Truth?
 Yes, in the eye of man, if to advance
 In sin still farther, he be not unwilling,
 But ready to destroy his friend, to prove
 His falsehood true. And yet this monster's called
 "The very soul of honour," which elates
 His heart, that whispers, "'tis a noble pride."
 Is honour, virtue? Once I saw a man
 Whose wanton lust, his neighbour's bed had robbed
 Of all its charm and joy,—his peace of mind, 140
 Once sweet, had blighted;—and his wearied life
 Ruthless, had taken from him; 'twas a man
 Whose being all deplored; for he had used
 Unpaid, the poor man's time,—and, smiling, duped
 The tradesman credulous;—the widow's eye 145
 Shed tears,—the orphan's bosom sobbed through
 him;
 And an indignant father oft has cursed,
 Aye, cursed him as his ruin, and the cause
 Of all his misery:—and yet this man,
 This villain, devil rather, was declar'd 150
 Of brightest honour, spotless, taintless, pure.

Is honour, wisdom ?—Wise was Hubert, wise
 In the true knowledge,—of the God of Love,
 Who knew his faith, and loved him for its proofs.
 And,—’twas a marvel,—Hubert was beloved 360
 By mortals too ; they loved him for his worth,
 His probity, benevolence, good sense,
 And wondered at his learning ; for a heart,
 Knowledge divine imparted, may possess
 All human learning and be Christian still. 365
 All men are weak, and prone to step and err
 Frequent, though ever grace divine upholds
 The Christian from deep sinfulness and hell.
 Hubert was warm, and once, in passion cast
 An odium on another’s character : 370
 But he was just,—and passion cool’d, perceived
 His error, and with swiftness sought to cure
 The wound, and suck the poison out. But he,
 The injured, was not thus to pardon won.
 His vengeful ire could naught remove but death, 375
 His own or Hubert’s, and a challenge quick was
 sent.
 The man of God was troubled, sore distress’d

By doubts, perplexities, and cruel fears ;
At length, he sought his God with fervent pray'r,
Took courage, burn'd the challenge, and return'd
A firm refusal ; for he could not do
The deed, and be against his Maker sinless.
What was the sequel ?—He was called a man
Void of all honour, courage, dignity,—
His enemy was lauded to the skies.

What then is honour, honour 'mongst mankind ?
Revenge, that not with satisfaction due,
Contented, thirsts to shed his fellow's blood ;—
A bragging fearlessness of death, that shuns
No opportunity, but longs for cause
To make itself perceived ;—a cool contempt,
A haughty scorn for those commands divine,
“ Thou shalt not kill ;—Man, do thyself no harm.”

Of late, the practice of earth's duellists
Has been, in part, improved ;—gross folly, now
Fills frequently the place where murder sat.
Some meet,—then separate ;—while others move

A farther step, and for the sake of noise
 Discharge their pistols at,—the empty wind ;—
 Then shake each other's hands, and loud profess 39
 The satisfaction of their honour fair.
 O fools, yet thinking themselves wise ;—O fools,
 To feel a pride in such an empty boast !
 “ I've fought a duel,—I have met my man,”
 Their glory constitutes, their endless fame. 40

Is this a glory, man's immortal soul
 To swell with rapture, proudly to elate ?
 Yet 'tis the pride of honour, often sung
 By earthly Muse corrupted, and the theme
 That fills the pages of a thousand books. 41
 Away with honour,—such as man esteems !
 Away with pride, derived from honour's source !

The press too harbours pride ;—of books, mayhap
 I'll sing hereafter, let it now suffice
 To trace one lineament.—The critic's eye, 42
 Snail-like, withdrawn, by all the world unseen,
 The fated pages scanning, glistens bright
 In self-complacency, and far protrudes

In conscience of its power, fancied oft,
 But often real ; while his murd'rous pen 410
 Blots out whole chapters, or with petty spleen,
 Dwells on one hapless word eternally.
 The author has his pride, as frequent shewn
 By lofty state affecting,—striving much
 To baffle curiosity,—to raise 415
 The public expectation,—but to raise,
 To disappoint ;—and sometimes it appears
 In swelling words and stories marvellous ;
 Designing all along himself to seem
 The hero of his tale ;—and oft it lies 420
 Concealed amidst a reprehensive strain
 Against his fellows, he, poor man ! forgetting
 That all these faults are centred in himself.
 Him too, the monied publisher, the man
 Jingling his gold, whose haughty, scornful glance 425
 Appears to petrify the shiv'ring scribe
 That stands before him, waiting long and chilled
 And anxiously the great man's pleasure,—pride
 Him hath not passed over in its course.

Trade, commerce, swim in pride ; and scarcely one 43.

Of all the numbers who pursue this path
To wealth and fame, is free;—from him who deals
In thousands, to the wretch that keeps a stall.

The latter, in his wishes to appear

A man of greater substance and extent A-1 C

Of reputation, tells the gaping crowd

Of childish auditors, of ounces sold

And shillings taken; and the little shop

Of village bustle, echoes with the name

Of pounds,—its larger neighbour in the town, A-1 D

Of hundreds,—and the wholesale trader hints

Of exportations, imports, Lloyd's and stock,—

The merchant, of his credit, and his vast

Plantations,—while the banker who can stretch

No farther, seems to be ashamed of all, A-1 E

Of money ignorant, in loss and profit

Unskill'd, and wishing to become a Lord.

While others boast of contracts formed, of loans

To foreign Powers, purchases so rare,

And bargains so uncommon, that the ear A-1 F

Of man ne'er heard the like,—'tis his delight,

His fond ambition to be thought the friend

Of all the great and noble :—such is Man.

Yes, such is man ; and with himself in love,
 Delighted with his own perfection, charmed 455
 With this, his glory,—wonder not, that Man
 Should rear his children in his steps to tread.
 Bear witness O ye colleges and halls,
 And schools for younger minds ;—and rural groves,
 And sacred solitudes, and public walks, 460
 And theatres and balls. I bid you all
 Bear me loud witness of the pride of youth.

And oft their youth's their pride,—the pride of youth
 In ev'ry sense. “ Go up thou bald head, go,”
 They shout, “ and trouble not our sight, nor spoil 465
 Our pleasures ; we are weary of thee,—go ;—”
 Old age or death, or both, will soon become
 Their portion ; but a few more fleeting years
 And all the brightness of the eye,—the bloom
 Delightful of the cheek,—the auburn hair 470
 Curling luxuriant,—the vigour, strength
 And freshness of their limbs,—in short, the youth

That forms their pride, for ever will have vanished,
And wasp-like, leave its sting, Remorse, behind.

Akin is pride of beauty, and akin 476
Its fall and punishment. Amelia's heart
It caused to bound, and made her eye-ball firm
And glowing, conscious of its power ;—crowds,
Her follow'd and admir'd, and rashly drank,
With ardour drank th' intoxicating streams 476
Of light she shed around ;—drank to their cost,
But to her bosom's happiness and pride.
At length she charmed no longer ; beauty shrunk,
Youth fled, the graces withered, love and joy
Her eye no longer brightened, or her cheek 477
Mantled with rosy blushes ;—but alone,
Deserted, friendless, old, unmarried, thus
You might have seen the once euchanting girl.—
She pined and sorrowed, broke her heart,—and died.

Strange contradiction of the human heart, 477
That vain, capricious, wayward, puzzling thing.—
The youth is proud for that he is a youth,

And tastes youth's pleasures, and is far from old.
"I'm young," he cries;—we smile assent.—'Tis well,
But the next moment call him what he is, 445
A boy, a child,—and thrilling to the quick,
He tells you he has numbered twelve round years,
And waxes sore offended that his stock
So grand, of wisdom, should have been conceived
An infant's, a mere stripling's. As the less, 500
The greater,—and a head may oft be seen,
The lower part just fledg'd with softest down,
Rising above its fellows, while the tongue
Demonstrates all the law, and clearly proves
That all true knowledge emanates from him; 565
He is its central point of gravity.

But see a darker picture.—By the wall,
The limits of his play-ground, slowly walks
With moody, thoughtful countenance, whose veins
Seem all but bursting, while its dark, deep lines 510
Proclaim the blackness of the soul within,—
A youth, whose sole ambition, only care,
And thought, is to obtain an envied prize.

For this, by day, by night he labours;—hours
 Are spent in study, more in thought,—at times 515
 In calculation deep, or means inventing,—
 Or fair, or false, to him no consequence,—
 His wish to forward and to realize.
 'Tis not a thirst for wisdom that incites
 His spirit;—wisdom were not worth the pains;— 520
 Were others dunces, dunce would he be too,
 Though just above them;—'tis Ambition's fire
 That burns within him, and consumes his vitals:
 And what and whence Ambition? Pride,—from
 pride.—

Open the College gates, and enter in 525
 Each room, each heart, and scan the inmost depths.
 Here, many learning seek,—the most, as sought
 The schoolboy, that they may obtain applause
 From mortals: but another kind of pride
 In others now arises, or, shoots forth 530
 Branches more vigorous;—a pride of name,
 Of family, and rank. And they will feel
 No small degree of rapture, that their house,—

Return once more to earth.—The love of wealth
 Which, tho' denied by all, each class pervades,
 Shall be the theme : but tho' denied by all,
 'Tis universal; scarce a heart but feels 56
 The golden passion, infamous as wide
 Extended, brutish, devilish, as base.
 Some say that wealth is power; and alas !
 I fear it is so;—their immortal souls,
 Vast, mighty, boundless things, it sinks to hell, 57
 To deep destruction :—pride of wealth is power.

Senseless, infatuated, purse-proud man !
 How can he feel a pride for what requires
 Such days of labour, and such nights of pain
 And watching, and anxiety to manage ? 58
 His real weight of care who begs his bread
 From door to door, compared to this man's, seems
 As nothing, calmness, happiness serene.
 To spend is trouble,—to preserve, is more.
 The very joys wealth promises, arrived,— 59
 The joys, I mean, of sense, the vain delight
 And nonsense pleasures of a carnal world,—

Arrived, are found deceitful ; with a sting,
 A venom'd sting embosomed in the honey ;
 And yet,—it nearly passes all the bounds 6..
 Of credence,—will the disappointed man
 Form more, more schemes, whose nature is the same !

To spend is trouble,—to preserve, is more.
 Bear witness all ye shutters, bolts, and bars,
 Ye nightly watch and dogs ferocious, traps 6..
 And unseen guns, the robber to destroy ;—
 Your testimony bring, what heartfelt care
 And trouble, wealth's security demands.
 Is not all this sufficient to convince
 That pride of wealth is folly ?—I can bring 6..
 Reasons still stronger, arguments more high,
 That none can gainsay or dispute ;—of wealth
 Th' uncertainty,—of his, the miser's heart,—
 Victim despicable ! the dreadful sight.
 These cannot be subverted ;—ev'ry day 6..
 Is pregnant with example,—of the wings
 Invisible of gold,—the anxious care,
 Moody, suspicious, brooding jealousy,

The thought distracted, and the appetite
Craving for more, and never, never cloy'd,—
That tear the miser's canker'd, loathsome heart.

Some pride in riches gained ;—the means by which
They gain them, others' bosoms oft inflate.—
The man of wealth hereditary, boasts
That grov'ling trade his hands hath not defiled ;—
Boasts, most acute discerner !—that he spends
The fruits for which his ancestors had toiled !
That naught he has or uses, hath been earned !
That he, the curse denounced, is free from ; he
Almost alone, while for him others sweat !
That he is indolent and slothful, void
Of all enjoyment—while his ploughman eats
In comfort, of the bread his hands have earned,
And sleeps in envied, blessed thoughtlessness
Of thieves and robbers and his much-loved gold.

Again,—of those whose riches are the gain
From their own barter,—few can cast
Backward the eye on all their course of life,

In the mind's solitude, when conscience' sway
Their souls acknowledge,—and perceive with joy, 64
That probity, uprightness, and desire
The golden, Christian rule of perfect love
To keep in all things and towards all men,
Have been their ruling principles, the laws
By which their acts were measured and fulfilled :— 65
And 'tis those few, those very few whose eye
Could thus acquit them, who would feel
In the vast retrospect, no pride elate
Their bosoms, of the mode their gold was won ;
To God, grateful would they ascribe all praise, 66
Whether unseen, or boldly in the world.
The rest, perchance, may sometimes slowly cast
Backward the eye on all their course of life,
In the mind's solitude, when conscience' sway
Their souls acknowledge, and perceive with pain, 67
That probity, uprightness, and desire
The golden, Christian rule of perfect love
To keep in all things and towards all men,
Have not been their strong principles, the laws
By which their acts were measured and fulfilled ;— 68

Yet 'tis this mass, this mighty mass, whose eye
Would thus convict them, who would feel
A sentiment of lofty pride elate
Their bosoms, of the mode their gold was won,—
'Tis they, who in the world would chuckling boast 705
Of rare-made bargains, and a run of luck.

And some there are, whose pride it is to raise
A horde of gold in secret, while they boast,
Yes, positively boast of loss, and tell
A thousand falsehoods of the evil turn 710
Of all their fortunes and their wretched life.
The world compassionates them, and deplores
The evil tidings ;—when behold ! a marvel !
The man whom all thought ruined, leaves his trade
Or wherewithal his riches were procured, 715
And starts the man of independence,—vain,
Purse-proud, tyrannical,—the scorn or hate
Of those who know him.—Such is pride of wealth.

One species more of universal pride.
Like as the tradesman of what rank or grade 720

Soever, wishes oft to make appear
His dealings, more extensive than they are ;—
So, not contented with repute, derived
From its true riches, will the heart of man
Strive that the world may think his purse more
large,

725

His deeds more mighty than in fact they are ;—
All to increase his little consequence,
And give his sentiments the greater weight.
Thus kings assume the majesty of God,
His titles and his power ;—statesmen think
Themselves all kings and rulers ;—senators
Praise their own eloquence, and each concerns
Himself his party's head ; while lawyers talk
Of clients whom they never saw ;—physicians
Of patients' rank and number,—if in truth
They don't include the half-starved, shiv'ring poor
That round their doors each morning, waiting stand
To beg gratuitous advice ; Christ said,
“ Let not thy left hand know thy right hand's
deeds ;”

726

727

But fashionable doctors, not content

728

With knowing them themselves, have warm desire
That the whole universe should know them too ;
Authors will boast of volumes never sold ;
Soldiers, of exploits,—happy for themselves,---
Never achieved ;---and bustling men of trade, 745
Of bargains, profits, losses never known :
Thus these, and the vast multitude beside,
Strive t' exaggerate their wealth and power ;
Except the poor man, he whose hands, 'tis known
Full well, just furnish him with daily bread, 750
Or who exists on charity alone ;
Yet will he not be silent, but will talk
Of riches once possessed, and honours fled.

Such is the layman's pride ;—its sad effects
Exceed all calculation ;—foreign wars, 755
Havoc and bloodshed,—discord nearer home
And stern dissensions, enmity and strife ;—
Foul persecutions, treasons, murders, thefts,
Domestic anguish, bankruptcies and deaths
And broken hearts ;—and loss of heav'nly bliss, 760
And gain of endless misery in hell,---

All flow from one unceasing fountain,—Pride.

O Pride ! the enemy of God and man !

Friend only of the devil !---but for thee,

Man had not wandered from his innocence,

75

Nor felon-like been banished Paradise !---

And but for thee, his innocence again

Would be renewed in heaven,---and a home,

A Paradise still fairer would be gained !

Would that thou wert not, pride !---but wert thou

not,

76

Soon would'st thou be ;---my wish is vanity.

Soon would'st thou be, alas ! too soon. Tho' man

Now blame his father Adam for his fall,

He then would be compelled himself to blame

For all his pride,---of his own will begot.

77

Man, proud !—Record it, angels !---grave it deep

And bright on heaven's roof !---but stay,---hold, hold

Your hands, in love and mercy hold, and tell

It, grave it not. No ! blot for ever out

The charge so heinous ;---melt it into chaos !

78

Man, proud ! of what ?—Of sin ;—the creature proud
Of that which the Creator hates ! of that
Blasphemous thing, too foul for God to see !
Of that which leads him to destruction sure !

Man, proud !—and glory in it, that he may 745
His dignity uphold !—the dignity
Of man !—what strange, perverted use of words !
What inconceivable anomaly !
Man's dignity !—which means his worthiness !
And whereof is he worthy ?—Conscience, speak,—750
Speak in thy loudest thunder-tones and wake
His spirit from its lethargy, its sleep
Of self-willed ignorance, its fancied, false
Security, its cold indifference,—
Speak thou as Eve, as Cain have heard thee speak, 755
As I have heard,—and whereof he is worthy
Tell him ;—death, never dying death, the fire
Unquenchable, the ever gnawing worm.

Man, proud !—yea, let him be ;—he hath wherewith

To glory,—noblest cause of pride;—a God
Of mercy infinite, of endless love ;
Whose mercy changeth not, whose love is still
The same ;—the strength of his salvation, fount
Of life and light and happiness ;—a God,
Perfection's essence,—higher than Supreme. 610

He hath wherewith to glory with a pride
That angels feel,—a pride that warms the heart
With gratitude to Him, of ev'ry good
And perfect gift the giver,—with a pride
That sanctifies the soul, the haughty will 615
Makes humble, and the carnal, vain desire
Reneweth ;—elevates the thoughts to God
And glory,—and th' affections fixes where
True, solid happiness alone is found
Blooming eternally in fairest youth. 620

Not farther distant are the heav'ns from hell,
Than is this pride from that deceitful thing
Which mortals worship.—This brings peace on earth,

Felicity in heaven ;—that, at best,
On earth is sorrow, misery in hell.

920

An Age of pride ! —Fit title for a world
Of sinful but immortal souls,—a world
That lieth in iniquity, and God,
The matchless God of love disdains to serve !
An Age of Pride !—And Pride is harbinger 815
To fell destruction,—God hath spoken, God
Who cannot lie,—to fell destruction, wrath
And indignation, and consuming fire !
O that the spirits of the earth could list
To harmony celestial, and be warned, 820
The day of visitation is at hand ;
The day of days ;—for which all other days
And nights have laboured,—and which hastens on,
Beckoned by mortals in their folly, spurred
By mortals in their pride.

825

Harp, strike a louder chord,
That haply earth may catch the echoed sound,
Hear and believe,—believe, repent and live !

And Thou, O Lord Almighty, still forbear
Thy threatened vengeance just, to exercise ;
Deal out more time of grace and pardon offered, १५०
That all may choose salvation ; and assist
Their first desires, their earliest aspirates
To thee, by the rich blessing of thy Spirit.
Thy will O Lord be done,—thy will is just.

BOOK III.

As turns the zealous traveller, the hill
Wearying and long, half mounted, and reviews
The steps he has ascended,—then regards
His onward path, and now again the past,—
At length he sudden pushes on his course,— 5
Thus paused the seraph bard his song, his harp
He lowered, while in attitude of thought,
Contemplating, remained he for a while :
At length, while round him there appeared to shine
A flame of holy indignation just,— 6
And with a voice whose accents were more stern

And full, yet saddened and harmonious still,
Raising his harp, his song he thus resumed :

The layman's pride !——Then is it that the Church
Hath harboured too the evil? Hath it crept
Into the holy place of God on earth,—
The holiest of holies, where hath deigned
To rest on men His spirit?—Hath it dared
To enter in, with feet unhallowed, where
On earth, the Lord supreme hath most delight
To visit oft?—Then wonder not, ye spheres !
Nor be, ye heav'ns, astounded ! that the heart
Of man is pride, his wisdom, foolishness !
Can evil spring from good ? The light of truth
From darkness of corruption ? Can the vine
Yield olives, or the fig-tree bring forth grapes ?
And thorns and thistles, can they furnish fruit
To satisfy the body's appetite ?—
Neither can pride of heart, humility.—
Were teachers humble, meekness would they
teach
And meekness practise, and the crowd, mayhap,

Would live in meekness too ;—but if the guide,
Self-called divine, be proud in spirit, proud
Alike to man and God,—ah ! though he may
At times inculcate piety and love 35
And patience, with his lips,—what can we seek
But pride and wickedness among his flock ?
His actions will be copied, not his words.
And reason too, in part ;—for if his faith
On what he preached, were built ; if he believed 40
Judgment, eternity, and heav'n and hell,
In consequence it follows, that the good
Would be his choice, the bad, his very scorn.
But if, what he proclaims to men, his heart
Deride in secret as a fable, jest 45
Or mockery,—and if his life declare
In public, that he deems it all a lie,
Who will adopt his spoken maxims, who
Receive as truth, that which he falsehood calls ?
Who practise what he scorns to practise, seek 50
What is by him unsought, or tread the paths
Wherein their “heavenly guide” forbears to
lead ?

O gross infatuation !—to suppose
 That hearts of men, to sin by nature prone,
 Will cast off sin, and in the robes of truth 35
 And holiness be found arrayed,—when he
 The priest, the heavenly messenger supposed,
 But false, deceitful prophet,—girts his sin
 The closest and the tightest to his breast !—
 The head corrupt, the members can't but be 40
 Polluted ;—likewise, when the stream is foul,—
 A stream that runs directly from the spring,
 And meets with no obstructions,—we must seek
 The grand, first cause of evil at the source ;
 And when an age for pride is infamous 45
 And foul corruption,—in the clergy's ranks
 Is found the principle, the vital fount,
 Or deadly rather, whence the mischief flows.

I well remember, when on earth, one morn,
 Pensive, I strolled, Theresa, to the spot 50
 Of ground, that in our happy, childish days
 We used to call our own ;—and many a flow'r,
 Joyful we gathered there, so pleased to show

The produce of our labour, the result
Of all our anxious care ;—and doubly pleased 75
If that our rose or snow-drop were the first
Gathered, the earliest of the garden's beauties,—
O happy days of childhood, happy, blest
Indeed unto the sons of men ; but ah !
Too short, too swiftly vanishing, too soon 80
Unsettled by the brisker wind of life
In public, that disperses all your joys,
And wafts them into chaos, and destroys
Your lightsome, fairy castles, and instead
Of these and almost innocence, leaves cares 85
And thoughts distracting, sorrow, pain
And sin ! Without the pleasing memory
Of you, in after life,—that life, indeed
Were oft a cup of bitterness, the dregs
Of Adam's misery ;—but with the sweets 90
Of recollection of your early sports,
Even tho' no later joys have been possessed,
Man's life is far from altogether sad,
And wholly whelmed in woe. And yet, alas !
So low are mortals fallen, that their purest, 95

Their sweetest pleasures are arrayed in sin :
 For what is the delight that fills the mind,
 When the first flow'r is gathered, but the seed,
 The promise of a later pride, perchance
 Because of greatest numbers slain. O, man !
 Thou need'st indeed be humbled !

—But my harp,
 What music art thou playing ? Thou seem'st pleased
 To dwell upon my childhood's happy scenes,
 Rather than busy Pride, that marred them all :—
 But turn thou back, my harp ! and raise again
 A note befitting theme of earthly pride :—
 Hereafter shalt thou wander, playful wild,
 In all that memory preserves still dear.

One morn, Theresa, found me sauntering
 Along that cherished spot ;—an Autumn morn
 It was,—the far horizon was concealed
 Amidst a light, thin fog, that seemed to try
 To curtain over the blue heavens too ;—
 But tried in vain, for the kind Sun arising,
 Dispersed the vapour and the sky laid bare :

The sun whose first beams fell upon my plot,—
'Twas now a gay parterre,—covered all o'er
With shrubs and flowers sweet and lively, such
As were permitted by the season ; chief of all,
And standing in the midst, a lovely rose,—
A latter rose ;—it may be, not so fair
Or strong as its Spring-sister, but 'twas then
The only one I had, and beautiful
Of its own sort, and above all the flow'rs
That still survived, maintained its place of Queen. (25

While other plants more tender, bowed their heads
And drooped their leaves, affected by the air
Chilly and damp of the late night, my rose
And some alike in vigour, stood erect,
Their colours gay and leaves all green, bedewed
And washed, and looking speechless gratitude.

An hour escaped, and I had wandered there
Again ;—but now was blowing in its strength
A cold and northern wind ;—the tender plants
Were still more sickly,—some looked nearly dead ; (26

But in the middle was my rose, as firm
And strong as ever, and more fresh, more full
Of beauty ;—and I loved it all the more.

Again I left ;—the wind was calmed, as noon 140
Approached, and the meridian sun displayed
Its perfect glory,—while its glowing rays,
Not hidden by dark clouds, dispersed their heat
Throughout the earth, nor miss'd my nursling plot.
Thus they continued their appointed time, 145
Till called to shine on other lands, and spread
Elsewhere their warmth, they slowly left the garden,
And eve came on ; while I, by humour called,
Forth sallied to enjoy the calm, still air,
And view my flowers. Ah! my lovely rose, 150
That in the morn so virgin-like had risen,
So pure, so charming,—and that had not felt
To injury, the Autumn's chilling blast,—
Was by the agency of the warm sun,
Despoiled of all its beauty ;—for its leaves, 155
Their freshness gone, and covered thick with dust,
Hung vigourless,—and deadened was their touch ;—

As one, so all whom I had left so fair ;—
 While they who heretofore had weakly seemed,
 Were by the genial influence revived 16
 In all their usual gaiety, and raised
 Their little heads on high, as if t' enjoy
 To fulness, all the triumph of the scene.

Not but the rose yet lived, and had mine eye
 Not earlier gazed upon it, it might yet 166
 Have pleased me ;---but it was the contrast sad
 With what it once had been,---while as it were
 T' increase my disappointment, other flow'rs
 That had not to the wind disclosed their charms,
 Now when the rose was injured and defaced, 170
 Displayed their varied beauty. I felt sick,
 And mourned and wept as Jonah for his gourd.

The little trial much vexation caused,
 And even grieved me much ;---the more, because
 I fancied it was like the ways of men ; 175
 Beyond the rest,—the Clergy. My parterre,
 I cried, is as the spirit of the Priests,

Their mind, their inmost soul. When Jesus formed
Their order,—'twas the morn of their Creation,—
Humility, of Christian graces first, 176
Like to the rose, was worthy of most praise,—
Though th' inferior virtues too were fair :—
While pride, ambition, love of fame, of gold,
Of power, pomp and gaudy show,—deceit
And falsehood, indolence and sloth, and all 177
The catalogue of forms of vice,—were weak
And drooping, hardly seen,—or seen alone
As the remains of the first father's fall,
The signs of natural depravity,
Which only death can wholly overcome. 178

Then came the darkened ages as the blast ;
Which made humility, the plant divine,
Appear more lovely,—while the stems of vice
Fell lower, and had nearly died away ;
When seasons of prosperity, as shone 179
The sun in its full splendour on the plot,
Darted their rays, and made humility
Grow weakly, dissipated all its scent,

Oppressed its leaves, which, covered with the dust
 Of earthly office,—green and fresh appeared 230
 No longer, but were loaded with defilement :—
 While they, the vices, flourished more and
 more,—

No sweet perfume had they to dissipate,—
 Have ever flourished since and flourish still.

Vice in the clergy !—rank, apostate pride, 235
 Their chief corruption whence all else proceed !—
 Ambition, covetousness, love of ease,
 Of luxury and pomp,—and bigotry
 And persecution, in the heart of him
 Who holds himself devoted by his God 240
 To teach in meekness, to forbear in love !—
 And casting far behind the joys of time
 And sensual pleasures, and restraining all
 And mortifying fleshly appetites
 That war against th' immortal soul,—to seek, 245
 And cause his fellows to seek too, for joys
 Far beyond earth and sky,—within a home
 Not made by hands, eternal in the heavens !

Pride in the clergy!—was it found in Him
Their Head, their Lord, their Master, whom to serve
And imitate, and copy in his life 220
And precepts, his obedience, faith, and love,
Is both their duty and their privilege?
Divine simplicity and meekness shone
In all his actions;—teaching, he displayed
Forbearance unexampled but in God 225
Forgiving, patience heretofore unknown
On earth;—reproving, 'twas in kindest love,
With sorrow and compassion for the state
Of fallen man, known intimate and clear
To his all-seeing eye;—reviled, again 230
Reviled he not;—when persecuted, smitten,
Blasphemed and spit upon, with meekness like
To that of dying lamb, he murmured not;—
Revening—'twas with Godlike dignity,
For evil giving good;—for stones and blows 235
And curses, and at last, a tort'ring death,
He healed the sick, the lame and blind restor'd
To use of all their members, and the dead
Invigorated with new life,—and gave

Who sought, the promise of eternal life ;— 240
And dying, in his agony, yet breathed
His soul, the pray'r, " My Father, and my
God,
Forgive them, for they know not what they do."

He was the minister of God to man ;
Far unlike his successors ;—they may teach, 245
But 'tis their own infallibility ;—
They too reprove, but 'tis in anger, wrath,
Oftimes combined with civil punishment ;—
And they may be reviled and suffer wrong,
And bear it—when 'tis all they can effect ;— 250
But ever watching opportunity
Like to return for like, and bad for bad.

Pride in the clergy !—tell them they are proud,
And a loud cry responsive, from each shore
That owns subjection to the Christian yoke, 255
Is rolled by the old Ocean's foaming waves
With noise as of ten thousand thunders loud,
" The Church in danger ! danger in the Church ! "

O fools! and impotent! and blind! and proud!
 What mean they by the Church?—A goodly band 260
 Of holy men on earth, whose souls convinced
 Of sin, and righteousness, and judgment, mourn
 Their sin with sorrow that repentance works,
 And trusting on the merits of His blood
 Who died to save them, pray their Father God 265
 T' impute to them his righteousness, and show'r
 Upon them his blest Spirit's dew, that they
 May work the fruits of righteousness, and thus
 The law of Christ fulfil, and be prepared
 For death, and judgment, and eternity? 270
 If such they call the Church, 'tis not in man
 Them t' endanger, whom the Father loves
 And shadows with his wings, and holds secure :
 True, they may meet affliction ;—he hath said
 That whom he loves he chastens ; but his word 275
 Is sacred, that they ever shall be safe,
 And need not fear what mortal man can do.

The Church in danger?—Of increasing not
 In numbers, while its clergy's pride prevents

By casting stumbling blocks, and closing all 230
The gates to free salvation; till the man
Who would find entrance, weary of the pains
And dangers of the way, and sick at heart
Of those who keep the portals, turns aside.

But it is not of such the cry was made 235
“The Church in danger.”—These are not the Church
In priestly eyes:—far from it; for 'tis these
Chiefly, who strive the pride of priests to humble:—
The prospect that their own ambition may
Be checked,—their own infallibility 240
Be doubted, their own wealth and pomp be stripped
And taken from them, their own pow'r be lost—
That pow'r I mean, which rises from a bond
Unholy, with the state, the government,
In civil matters; blending into one 245
What Christ left twain;—and not the sov'reign pow'r
Of mild persuasion, firm example, blest
And ever followed by the aid divine
Of God the Spirit,—'tis this prospect, sad
And bleak to carnal lusts and appetites, 250

That makes them shout " The Church in danger, we,
The priests, God's own anointed, are not safe ! "

O that they were in danger !—O that they
Were forced, constrained to crucify their pride,
And aught that militates against their God ! 345
O that they were in danger of becoming
Holy, meek, humble ministers of Christ !

A man who claims infallibility
Is proud of his own judgment ; and the Church
That makes such boast her glory, is corrupt. 350
Absurd ! that any woman-born, and full,
In consequence, of sin, should dare usurp
The kingdom of his brother's conscience,—man
And woman-born, as is himself,—and therefore free
To seek and choose,—and no more liable 355
To err, than he the tyrant.—If the Church decree
That only which the Bible hath decreed,—
At least, 'tis needless. They whose souls the word,
The written word of God, refuse, will hardly yield
To man's authority, sincerely yield. 360

But if the form or doctrine be not found
By God ordained, enjoined,—man's best intents
Are too much sullied, his most righteous acts
Too full of all iniquity, that he
Should think his judgment free from wrong,—much
less 325

That he, by dint of physic strength, should force
His own opinion on his brother's mind.

Truth, righteous Truth, that emanates, a ray
Of spotless purity, from heaven's King,
Darted on earth, unfettered, and there shines 330
Unfettered only ;—strive to cast around
Her, chains,—she vanishes,—and you will bind
The graceless phantom, Falsehood, in her stead.
The soul of man, the breath of life, that flows
Free, independent thro' the human race, 335
Incapable of living in a state
Of slavery, of bearing any yoke
Imposed by others,—self-will is no yoke,—
Jealous of all encroachment on its right,
Its privilege of thought and choice in aught 340

To its own self pertaining, was not meant
 By God its author, to submit the reins
 That guide it to a fellow-man ;—nor will
 It pay to his commands, obedience ;—firm,
 Of its own right convinced, it scorns to think, 145
 To act because another bids ;—the flesh,
 T'escape correction, may belie the soul
 And own conviction, but th' immortal mind,
 The soul, the reason, still remain unstamped,
 And harder and more stubborn grow, as man : 150
 Bears on the stamp with greater physic force.

Man's reason never was convinced, by might
 Of any thing but reason. Can the great
 Be subject to the less ? the infinite
 To finite ? to impure mortality 155
 The pure immortal ? spirits born of God,
 To clods of earth ? the unseen to the seen ?
 The untouched to the felt ? and to the known,
 The unknown, unbound, inconceivable ?

Man's reason never was convinced, by might 160

Of any thing but reason ; itself love
 Is not excepted. Heat will soften wax,
 And fit it for reception of the seal,
 But will not stamp it ; and the love of God
 Considered by the soul, may cause each nerve 346
 To thrill with rapture, and feel gratitude
 And adoration for its vast display ;—
 But 'twill not on that spirit, fix the stamp
 Of sure conviction that there is a God ;—
 It cannot, though it may prepare the mind 347
 To place a faith immoveable, on One,
 All love, all goodness, all benevolence.

How then can man presume to hope to work
 A soul's conviction by his high decrees,
 Pompous enactments, sanguinary threats, 348
 Or cruelties, more sanguinary still ?—
 Popes may decree, ordain may councils, solve
 And resolve may synods, and enact new
 laws
 May senates, conferences may appoint,
 And general assemblies may decide,— 349

But never will be thrall'd the soul of man,
 By aught they proudly order or forbid.
 'Twas made in freedom—free it must remain.

Freedom ! fair, boasted thing ! on earth oft sung
 But seldom known, more seldom understood,— 315
 'Tis of religious liberty I speak ;
 Of civil, more hereafter, though the two
 Are less disjoined than is conceived by men,—
 What art thou, what thy nature, and from whence
 Comes it that mortals seldom know, and feel 320
 Thy pow'r?—" He is the freeman whom the
 truth

Makes free," sang pious Cowper, bard of heaven ;
 And truth makes all men free, who love the light
 She sheds around, and choose to walk therein ;
 She sets them free from prejudice and fear, 325
 And sin, and bondage ; gives them promises
 And hopes of heav'n, on earth, and to that heav'n
 Admission, all unpurchased, free of cost.

Such is the Christian freedom, which the soul

Enjoys that knows the truth ;—but 'tis on earth, 400
 The liberty of mind, of flowing thought
 Alone, that cannot be restrained by man ;—
 The rest is future, to no mortal known,
 And that is wanting to complete the whole ;
 The wondrous whole, which only heav'n can give, 405
 Which only they of heav'n possess'd, enjoy.

But liberty of body, liberty
 His thoughts to publish, is by man denied
 Frequent unto his fellow man ; would else
 His freedom here below be near akin 410
 To that in heaven's prospect ; but the pride
 Of man to rule his breth'ren, to direct
 Their thoughts and actions, banishes a part
 Which earth can furnish ;—as if earth were blest
 Too much, and earthly happiness too great ! 415

Shame ! shame to mortals ! endless infamy,
 To all who seek another's mind to rule
 By brutal force,—themselves the greatest slaves !
 Speak it ye thousands, whose warm blood was shed

On Gallia's land !—Not you, I mean, who poured 414
 Your life-stream in your Saviour's cause, for ye
 Were slain by the sworn foes of liberty,
 Both civil and religious;—you I call,
 You who were murdered by a maniac mob,
 That ceaseless shouted—" Liberty for ever ! " 425

But they are not the Age that now resides
 On earth.—Ye sons of Erin, speak it then,
 Speak it in the voice of millions, million tongues
 Blended in one acclaim, for Liberty;—
 Speak it to whom ?—To hordes of Gothics rude, 430
 Savage and barbarous, your lovely isle
 Wild overrunning, and destroying all
 Its beauty ?—Or to followers of Mahomet
 Uncivilised and blasphemous, who boast
 And glory in a Christian bound or slain ?— 435
 Alas ! 'tis not to these, would God it were,—
 But hold, my harp, my tongue, His will be done,—
 Speak ye to Sons of Britain, joined by blood
 And Monarch, laws and manners to yourselves !—
 And tell them they who seek to thrall the mind, 440

Th' immortal mind,—the body to hold bound
And captive, till the soul can change its creed,—
Tell them, I bid you, they are slaves, vile slaves,
Slaves to their pride of heart, their lust of power !
Bid them no longer talk of liberty, 445
Their liberty, so vaunted through all climes,
Till ye are free!—by them led captive,—ye
Whose interests they trample under foot,
That they may gain some fancied privilege,—
But what they gain, shall buy “ The field of blood.” 450

To Sons of Britain ?—Not to sons alone
Appeal for freedom ; other names have they
Who violate your rights, and vainly strive
To lead your spirits bound in slavery,
Than sons ; —'tis Britain's spiritual guides, 455
Her priesthood, at whose hands you must demand.
What God has given,—what they dare withhold.—

What sang I ?—Have the ministers of God,
His vows upon them that they should proclaim
Peace, and good-will, and charity 'mongst men,— 460

Have they, thus sworn, thus destined, lit the fire
 Of persecution on their brother's head,
 To make him think as they?—Is it their mouth
 That ever blows the flame with the strong wind
 Of calumny and foul reproach ;—their hand, 465
 That with the civil sword incessantly
 Stirs up the raging fire, and eager, feeds
 It with its victims' pains and sorrows,—homes
 Deserted, social peace and happiness
 For ever fled, hearts broken with despair,—— 470
 Is this the work of Britain's clergy,—they
 Who, by their vast, extensive influence
 Derived from thousand sources, could disperse
 Throughout the empire, liberality
 Of thought, and Christian charity, and love? 475
 Could make the master-spring, the primal source
 Of ev'ry action? Is it possible that they
 Loudly protesting 'gainst the pow'r assumed
 By Popes—with cheek unblushing, steadfast
 eye,
 And burning breast,—can venture to assert 480
 Their own infallibility?—and steep

Their hands, and wade knee-deep in sufferings
Of others, for to prove themselves are right?

Granted some few,—though very few,—have hearts
Convinced sincerely, that the path they tread,——
In ev'ry Age the path of persecution
For conscience' sake, has been deep-stained with
blood,—

Is one by God approv'd, to which his hand
Points, and on which his smiling glory shines ;—
Granted, that in the hearts of these, there burns 490
No flame unhallowed, whether love of wealth,
Of place, or power,—naught but love of God ;
And farther granted,—which few souls that think
In earnest can deny,—that in their Church
Stained and corrupted as it is, befouled 495
With filthy lucre, as a harlot's face
Painted with gaudy pomp, and close allied,
Abominable whoredom ! union foul !
With what she needs not if she be of God,—
The civil constitution of the realm,—— 500
Its king her head, its senators her bishops,

Her priests its magistrates, her creed declared
 The land's religion,—yet so close allied
 To secular affairs as thus she is,—
 And proud of the ill-fated tie, the bond 637
 Unholy and forbidden as her soul
 May be, in grasp of fancied dignity
 More high and noble than were Christ alone
 Her head considered,——still, corrupted as she is,
 Granted her far more free from filth than she, 640
 Pronounced by God the Whore of Babylon ;—
 That therefore as of two the better, she
 The choice of all men should become, to one
 Still worse in preference ;——then loud demand,
 Ye sons of Erin,—of her few sincere, 645
 Of those, if such there be, whose warm desire
 It is to save you, and to bring you home
 To their own purer Church,—if force should be
 The means made use of !—Ask them if the Word,
 The Truth of God, should not be free to run 650
 Its glorious course, unhampered by the clogs
 That men affix.—Then point them to the words,
 The everlasting words of Truth, the words,

The promise of a God, who God would cease
 To be, the moment that he lied,—and read— 515
 Read it with trembling, ye are mortals, read
 With application to yourselves, your Church,
 As well as unto others, or, far more—
 “Just is damnation unto them who say
 Let us do evil that a good may come.” 520
 “To him that addeth to this truth, will I
 The God, add the dread curse contain’d therein;
 From him who taketh from it, I the God,
 His part will take away of endless bliss!”

But not alone, should sons of Ireland raise 525
 The cry for freedom, and the loud reproach
 Of shame, to all who slaves would make of mind!—
 Join in, ye sufferers of ev’ry clime
 And kindred, nation, tongue, who from the cause
 Of persecution for your conscience’ sake, 530
 From Liberty are cruelly debarred.
 ’Twould fail to point them out in detail;—all
 The continent of Europe is surcharged
 With victims;—while across the western sea,

A bright star is arising;—'tis the star 625
 Of the world's evening, gilding all around
 With prospect of religious liberty.
 Light travels far and quickly; and a light
 As this so splendid, spreads its glorious beams
 Thro' all Creation;—may it higher rise 630
 Towards the world's meridian;—'tis beheld,
 And wondered at, and praised, and much admir'd
 By all the nations, even in its dawn,
 When but a distant glimmering is seen;—
 What shall be done then at its fulness, what 635
 When it shall reach its glory, and extend
 Illuminating beams thro' ev'ry land?—
 But wander back, my harp, nor thus digress
 At sight of each attraction in thy course.

I said that Europe's spacious continent,— 640
 The most enlightened of the globe,—I mean
 In art and science,—wonderful in all
 But freedom, with the victims is surcharged
 Of persecution. And, alas! my song
 Is too removed from falsehood. True it is 645

That since you left our world, Theresa, light
 Of freedom shines more brightly ; and the cause,—
 'Tis horrible that such should be the truth,
 'Tis to themselves most horrible,—is this,—
 That half the priesthood, swollen big with pride, 70
 And overgrown in power, burst and fell ;
 And in their fall, they dropt the master-key
 That locked the chains of Europe's slavery ;
 Or rather,—to keep up the metaphor,—
 It was their bloated body that had hid 75
 The star of liberty from mortal sight ;—
 And when the portion fell itself had burst,
 Thick darkness passed away ;—a joyful dawn
 Of a fresh morning rose. Spain, Italy,
 And France and Portugal, the largest share 80
 Of the new light received ; but, or it spread,
 Or cast its bright reflection through the whole
 Of the vast Continent ;—nor Albion miss'd
 A portion ;—laws more wise and merciful,
 With more of Christian spirit were decreed ;— 85
 The light still gains upon her more and more,—
 The clouds are breaking, and the azure sky

At times appears between ; and they shall break,
 And they shall pass away, and Freedom's star
 Shall shine all glorious on our much-loved isle 510
 When His, our God's appointed time shall come.

Yes, cheering is the prospect, bright the hope,
 The promise of a full, a perfect day.
 But much must first be done;—our Sister Isle
 Is not the only country still enthrall'd,— 515
 Enthralled most chiefly thro' the Clergy's pride,—
 In bondage, still depriv'd of her just rights.
 Hereafter, in the rolling without end
 Of vast eternity, I can relate
 More largely of the people under yoke;— 600
 At present, one alone I'll mention, one
 Next to my fellow subjects, while on earth
 The dearest to my heart,—the fallen Jews.
 'Midst them the Day Star of Salvation rose,—
 They were the holy place, the sacred fane, 605
 In which for ages, most secure, were kept
 The oracles, the archives of our God.
 They were his own peculiar people, seed

Of him the faithful, guarded by His hand,
And tended by His eye,—and most of all, 60
Our Christ, our Saviour was their brother,—he
Has deigned to love them, and my inmost soul
Must love them too, as blissful seraphs love.
Can I forget thee, O, Jerusalem?
The city of my God, the earthly spot 65
In which he most delighted, where the chief
Of all his mighty acts were shown, and where
Descended in its plenitude, his love?
Forget thee, O Jerusalem? the place
That gave my soul a Saviour? In thy fall 70
That soul must love thee,—pity thee at least
For scorning the Messiah, who by thee
Rejected, visited the Gentile land;—
Must blame thee for the hardness of thy heart,
Yet pity still thy fate;—and near akin 75
Is heav'nly pity to a heav'nly love.

Jerusalem! I never can forget
Thee.—Wert thou once again from earth to rise,
In more than pristine strength and loveliness

Renewed,—thy joy should be my fond delight,— 630
 My pleasure, thy advancement. Should I feel
 So much thy glory? how mine eye must weep
 At sight of thine abasement! how my heart
 Must mourn to know thee bound in slavery!
 Bound by all nations, to the vilest slaves,— 640
 In ev'ry land, a proverb, a reproach,
 A butt for persecution; where may lodge
 The venom'd shaft, no other game in view;—
 Thy cries, the warm heart throbbing with delight,—
 Thy patience under punishment deserved, 650
 Branded as cowardice,—thy poverty
 And impotence, thy writhing at the touch
 That from thee would extort thy hard-earned wealth,
 The sport, the mimicry of all around!
 How are the mighty fallen! and the strong 660
 Disheartened, and the city's pride laid low,—
 From curse of an insulted Déity.

But is the pride of heart that tramples low
 The wretch already fallen, justified
 Thus trampling by the curse pronounced of God? 670

The Babylonish harlot cursed He too ;—
But is that man secure from wrath, whose soul
Unwarned by what her lying prophecies
Called on her head from heaven, dares assert
“ My creed is right, my prophecy is sure,— 66
Receive it, or thy heart my sword shall feel,”
Whose hand then buries deep the sword in blood ?
Oh, no ! he is the viler of the two ;
With tenfold light, and warnings twice tenfold,
He sins the very sin, performs the act, 66
The self same act, which, pointed at himself,
Rouses up all his fury and revenge.

What was his character whose arm first drew
The sword of civil persecution, cast
Its scabbard into chaos,—then the blade 66
Dyed in the blood of Christians, on pretence
Of spreading the Messiah’s sovereignty,
And cleansing from impurity the Church ?
What was he ?—Speak, ye martyred by his hand,
Now standing round the throne of God, and tell, 67
Loudly that Britain’s sons may catch the sound,

Britain most chiefly, though a world should hear,—
 Tell of his whoredoms, his debaucheries,
 His drunkenness, his murders, robberies,
 Lust, avarice, and tyranny ;—all born 675
 Of foul ambition, overwhelming pride ;—
 Then tell them that this monster of all vice,
 Was an anointed minister of God,—
 And bid them view themselves, repent and live.

Infallibility of priests ! let hell 680
 Bring forth the numbers who have prophecied
 With lying tongues, “ The burden of the Lord ! ”
 Bring them forth all, that Earth may stand amazed
 At her credulity, which, each in turn
 Hath credited, as witness her slain sons !— 685
 Nor let her taunting make reply, “ Of whom
 Shall I receive the word ? ” Of none, as sure,
 But when her conscience whispers, “ This is Truth ! ”
 Of none, as sure, but whom the word of God,
 His Holy book agrees with. Let her there 690
 Consult,—each mortal for himself,—for him
 No other can be damned,—it follows then,

For him no other should believe. Mayhap
He says, " But I am ignorant and weak,
Nor can my mind's eye visibly perceive 65
These things mysterious, hard to understand ;—
Of whom then shall I seek assistance ?—who
Shall teach my feet the way, since all are blind ?"—
All are not blind, though liable to be ;—
And he should ask assistance, first of God 70
The Holy Spirit ; as his means, the man
Who, having pray'rful gathered his own creed
From Holy Scripture, firmly stands therein,
Able to give a reason of the hope
That is within him ;—yet who therein stands 75
Though firmly, stubborn not, not obstinate
Rocky and self-willed, sure that he alone
The meaning of Jehovah hath divulg'd ;
But humble, conscious of mortality,
Of sin and weakness equal to his fellows ;— 80
Who feels he's right, yet thinks he may be wrong ;—
Who his own soul can trust, and firmly trust
To its own credence ; but who wishes not
Others should blindly follow where he leads.

Are such thy guides, O Britain ? are they such, 715
Humble and lowly, meek and charitable,
To whom thou hast delivered the great charge
Of conscience keepers ? Not of those I speak
Alone, the law-established priests,—the seals
Of office their forerunner, robes of state 720
Their garments, and the civil sword their guard,—
But of those also who have dared her power
And left her bosom, inwardly convinced
That God was not within her of a truth.

They who first left her, and her dared to do 725
Her worst upon them, for they would not yield
To fellow man's dominion their free minds,—
Seceded like the vivid gleams that fly
From off a dying lamp, so bright they seemed ;—
And darkness, grossest darkness left behind. 730
So bright they seemed, but darkness soon became ;—
For as the gleams, they parted in their flight,
And vainly strove each other to outvie,
Not in their splendid purity of light,
But in their body's compass and extent ; 735

Till spreading on, they soon in blackness merged.

Here must I drop the simile,—for some,—

Unlike the lamp's last vestiges of light,—

Have frequent been rekindled, and display'd

Much of primeval glory, bright and pure ;

740

But for their body, 'tis too visible

Alas ! that evil is their nature ;—oft,

Too oft 'tis clear, that had they but the pow'r,

They have the will to proudly tyrannize

Above their fellows ;—did they think the ear

745

Would listen to them, they could speedy form,

Each one his own, an universal creed :

They too themselves infallible conceive.

Both are impure ; consists the pride of one

In worldly pomp and grandeur, titles, wealth

750

And national support, —false dignity !

That of the other, oft in eloquence,—

Of those who hear, in numbers ;—oft 'tis shown

In noisy controversy, belching spleen

And anger 'gainst a brother in dissent ;—

755

Oft in reproach against the nation's Church ;—

Instead of suffering their own light to burn
 So clearly in the world, that others seeing
 Their life of faith and virtue, might be led
 To glorify in truth their Father God ;— 76
 And oft,—hypocrisy is worst of sins,—
 Deceit that longs to blind both God and man,
 Is horribly presumptuous, and shall feel
 The hottest vengeance of a righteous God,—
 Yes oft they practise deeds of charity 76
 And love apparent,—and they loudly talk
 Of warm benevolence and sympathy,
 And holy love and Christian charity,
 But all,—in hope of gaining earthly fame,
 Renown 'mongst men, the notice of the great, 77
 The wonder of the little; of becoming
 The universal theme on ev'ry tongue.

Both are impure ; consists the pride of both
 In their self-deemed infallibility ;—
 The greater worldly pow'r possess'd, the crime 77
 Becomes the greater in its consequence,—
 And were they severally changed,—the priest

Dissenter turned,—he of dissent, the priest,—
 I fear,—with few exceptions,—that the men
 Alone would vary,—the same would measures be. 760

Both are impure, and pride has made them so;—
 But in Dissenters' ranks is found a band
 Prouder than all beside, compared to whom,
 Even the Babylonish whore herself
 Is pure and holy;—she has sinned in things 765
 True of great import, but the leading point
 Of Christian doctrine, faith in Jesus Christ
 As equal, fellow to the Father, God
 Supreme and universal yet the Son
 Of God and son of man,—and faith in God 770
 The Spirit, as the equal, fellow both
 To God the Father and of God the Son,—
 Faith in a triune Godhead, has preserved
 Untouched and uncorrupted.—Is it then
 That there are found who God's Almighty Word 775
 Have dared pronounce a lie? whose blasphemy
 Hath likened—the I AM, the Lord of Heaven,
 To feeble man? who boldly call that false

Which their weak, pigmy reason understands
 Not, or in part alone? nor marvel is it;
 "Myst'ries are food for angels;"—man, below,
 Must seek, as 'twere, the milk of knowledge; there,
 In heav'n, if he should reach it, may he eat
 The stronger food and inwardly digest,
 And drink in understanding from the fount
 Of God's Omniscience,—and increase in strength
 Of purest wisdom, ages without end :——
 Faith will then be a thing forgotten, lost
 In clearest evidence of face to face;
 'Twas tried, 'twas proved, and now its blest reward
 Is given,—satisfaction, certainty :—
 'Twas tried, 'twas needed; else would naught have
 proved
 "His loyalty, obedience;"—with the light
 Bestow'd on earth, he saw and was convinced;
 Where light reached not, but darkness shadowed all,
 If in the gloom was heard the voice of God,
 "Believe!"——he did believe, and would have still
 Believed,—tho' thousand times more wonderful,
 Past the horizon of his reason's eye,—

What God had spoken ; nor have thought it false. 620
 Such faith must all possess who hope for heaven.—
 Such faith possess they not, who, vainly proud
 Of their own reason, credence give not, where
 They understand not ;—daring to deny
 From thence a God Incarnate, God and man 625
 In double nature yet in person joined.

Where stop the agents of Omnipotence ?
 Where shall His will find limit ?—God, who
 plann'd
 With matchless wisdom, sure can execute
 With equal power and facility :— 630
 He ceases otherwise to be a God.—
 High as the heavens are above the earth,
 He hath declared, surmount the thoughts of man
 His thoughts,—surmount the ways of man His ways ;—
 Yet spite of all will man persist to place 635
 A living faith, where he can see alone ;
 Rather persist salvation to reject,
 Than humbly own the wisdom of a God
 Surpasses his ; than make confession meek

Of inability to soar to heav'n etc
 On wings of his own forming,—than accept
 Of God-made-Man's assistance, him to save,
 Because he knows not how that God was man.

Would that it were in Britain's isle alone
 Appeared the evil ;—but all Europe groans,— etc
 Britain the freest portion,—with the sin,
 The deadly pride.——And ministers of God,—
 So called and so devoted,—loud proclaim
 The hellish doctrine, and to spread it strive
 With all their powers;—strive that men should build etc
 Their hopes eternal on a bed of sand,
 And not on Him, the Rock of Ages, Christ,
 Meridian fulness of the Deity.

Blind, erring shepherds ! miserable guides !
 False traitors ! arch deceivers ! perjured men ! etc
 Untitled, lying prophets ! enemies
 To God ! and greater enemies to man !
 Who would their God deprive of glory !—Man,
 Alas ! they do deprive of life eternal !

As likewise of his hopes on earth,—his faith, 66
 His consolation, and his prospect bright
 Though distant, of a never-ending bliss,—
 By falsely crying, “Peace, my brother, Peace,”—
 When God hath sworn, “To them there is no peace,
 Who love the paths of sin!”—Thus luring on 67
 With false and flattering visions, him they bring
 Unto the bed of death;—but leave him there,
 When succour most is needed, in the world
 Without a hope, without a Saviour’s love!

How long, Jehovah, mighty King! how long 67
 Shall mercy hold back justice? and restrain
 Thy fiery vengeance from an impious world?
 Descend from heav’n, Almighty! plead thy cause
 With thunder, since thy show’rs of love are scorn’d;—
 Let fall thy righteous judgments on an Age 68
 Deep buried in iniquity;—and cleanse
 Away the filthiness that stains thy Church,
 The pride of thy sworn ministers!

—Alas!

What seek I?—let me nothing ask amiss,

O God! my trust! But while my spirit views
The pride of men, my indignation burns
Within me;—equalled, aye, surpassed
By wonder at thy patience, righteous God!—
But still were they my brethren in the flesh,
My brethren, my companions;—can I see
Them sinking to the groundless deep, and feel
No sorrow for their awful fate; a fate,
But for thy loving-kindness, O my God!
That would have been mine own? Then spare, still
spare,
If that I may petition,—nor withdraw
As yet thy mercy; but upon them pour
Floods of conviction, that shall wash away
Their stains, and purify again thy Church.
But pardon my presumption, O my God,
And let thy will be done,—thy will is just.

BOOK IV.

As one, when reading of the mighty acts
Of earthly hero, or the wond'rous sights
Beheld by traveller, or the fictions wild
Of fabled gods and demi-gods, his book
Half-closing lays aside, and awe-struck, views
With mixed astonishment and doubt, the theme :—
So sudden paused the heavenly bard, and dumb
Became his harp strings ; —silence best could speak
His flaming indignation at the sight
Of so much pride in laity and church,
So much corruption in the heart of man.

Yet with his indignation was there mingled
Compassion,—and with seraphs' tears he wept
Man's fall and ruin,—wept, yet suffered not
A loss of bliss,—thus prompts the heavenly muse,
Whom at this hour of midnight lone I seek,
Humble yet fervent, and with pure desire
That Truth celestial may inspire my song.

His was a sorrow,—if I may compare
'The greater to the less,—as feels the child,
His plaything crush'd, though may be in its place
A crowd far gayer are presented ; which
His face illuminate with smiles of joy,
His weeping eyes with brightness, and his frame
Elate with bliss and ecstasy ;—yet still
He casts a frequent glance upon the wreck
That once had formed his hopes of happiness,
His little all.—But far unlike his grief
In its duration to the seraph bard's ;—
The infant's lingers but a minute ; his,
The angel's, so endured in length, that moved
To break the stillness mute, Theresa thus

Address'd her brother, sweetly sympathising
In his affliction,—in his “joy of grief.”

“Alas! my brother,—fall'n indeed is man,—
Fallen from vast sublimity, to depth
Of vice, of woe, more vast, more wonderful !—
Below, secluded as my life was pass'd,—
Happy seclusion! blest obscurity!
If seen, if known, I might have fallen too,—
Much reached my ear of vice abroad, of pride
Unholy, principles impure, and acts
Foul and insulting to the blessed God ;—
But it was rumour only ; for mine eye
Ne'er saw the wickedness, mine ear ne'er heard
Its God abused ;—and I had fondly hoped
Sin's conquests were exaggerated,—hid
And diminished, those of righteousness ;—I hoped
That all the world was like the spot I knew,
So fair and lovely,—and th' inhabitants
My lightsome fancy pictured oft like you
My brother,—all, like whom to me were known :—
But I confess, imagination's reins

Had then been loosened ;—yet, I ne'er conceived
Mankind as grossly sunk, as slaves to sin ;—
And since in heav'n, have I indulged the hope
That daily they grew better, as the Age
Received increase of knowledge, purer light,
Man to direct more clearly to his God.
Yes, I had hoped that fifty years had purged
Away their dross ;—that of them you would speak
As lovely once again and fair ; so fair,
So lovely, that mine eyes should know them not.
Alas ! indeed, I know them not ;—the gold
Is dimmed and tarnished ; beauty's glowing charms
Are withered and decayed ; the royal throne
To dust is trampled ; and the free-born mind
By sin is fettered, cramped, controlled,—is borne
To hell by its dread tyrant, borne away
From heaven, from glory, and from liberty !”

Thus she in soothing sympathy pursued
Her brother's train of thought ;—nor missed his ear
The gentle sounds, and from his reverie
Arousing, listened he to all she said ;—

And catching at her closing word which seemed
As 'twere to pierce his soul, his harp he raised,
And joined again its music to his song.

O liberty! far boasted, famous thing!—
To civil liberty I now allude—
The meteor of all Ages, which—their eyes
Deceived,—hath ever, ever 'scaped their grasp!—
Ever, since Adam by a wily foe
Ensnared, received sin welcome to his heart;
That heart, where peaceful heretofore had dwelt
Blest liberty,—by God 'twas blessed—to man;
Sin, whose first action there was to destroy
With jealous malice, man's enchanting friend;
For hateful was her presence, and that two
Should nestle in one bosom pride forbade,
And therefore slew the other; but the death
Was soon avenged and fully. Ere the blow
Its purpose well effected, stern remorse
The murderer had seized, nor would depart,
Nor free his hold;—but threatened there to hang
Till life again to liberty was giv'n:

To liberty, whose vacant ghost was seen
Parading round the earth;—was seen by sin
Now longing for her presence, for her life,
Her dwelling-place in man ;—was seen by sin
Who vainly hoping her to overtake,
Detain, reanimate,—pursued the shade
Thro' every nation, under every clime ;—
Pursued in vain, successless ;—or if chance
Caused him to reach the shadow, when 'twas grasped,
Shadow indeed 'twas found, and vanity.
This doctrine, earthly sages frequent taught ;—
Taught, as in application to themselves,
Though not to others ;—weak indeed were pride
In human heart to witness, “ Man may search
For freedom, but will ever search in vain !”
No ! though they would not dare themselves to call
Possessed of liberty, they boasted high
Of fathers and of brethren,—Greece and Rome,—
And Switzerland and Britain in the days
Fallen long since into eternity,
Who had regained their freedom, not the ghost
Alone,—the living body, animate.

Fools !—had they power death to change to life ?
Granted that they possessed it, that the dead
Revived at their command, that liberty
In consequence, their guest again became ;—
Then Sin must have been banished, for the twain
Have naught in common ;—liberty or Sin
Dwells in the bosom, and there dwells alone.
Granted that Sin was banished ;—liberty
Were then Sin's victor, and would need a foe
Than Sin more subtle, stronger, to dislodge
A second time, the peaceful favourite.
But Sin is chief of its own forces, lord
Supreme o'er all its empire ; death and hell
And devils are obedient to its rule ;—
Then rivalless had freedom reigned, and Man
No more had left in slavery to Sin.

And is it so ?——I hear a ceaseless groan,
Unvaried, deep, monotonous, from earth
Arising ;—from the shores of far-famed Greece,
And equal Rome as famous :—tells the one
Of classic land despoiled, marauding Turk,

Wives, daughters ravished, pillaged wealth, and
homes

Rased and laid desolate, and slavish tasks
And hellish cruelties, and death ;—and tells
The other loud of classic land despoiled,
Marauding priest, wives, daughters base seduced,
And pillaged wealth, and peaceful homes the prey
To rank disorder, and the cruelties
Earth born but hell-devised, of bigotry
And persecution foul, for conscience' sake ;—
Are they who such groans utter, heirs direct
To liberty ? is freedom theirs by right ?
Let earthly wisdom fall, and earthly sage
Be silenced by the foolishness of truth.

But why to latter ages make appeal ?
Seek in those times so vaunted, for the proof
Distinct of their own slavery. Go back,
Search their own annals, and in searching, find
That freedom blest nor Greek nor Roman. What
Is freedom ? “ He the freeman is whom truth
Makes free,” sang Cowper ;—liberty is truth ;—

But not even he, dear bard, must guide my song
Infallibly; the Scriptures shall define
Its real nature: "Where God's Spirit is,
Is liberty," said holy Paul, and he
Was taught of God and knew the heart of Man.
And did His Spirit, holy so and pure
As not to see iniquity, reside
With them who held their fellows captive-bound
By chains of iron?—with those spirits dwell
Who gloried, slaves in making,—spreading wide
Their proper pow'r and tyranny?— Can he
Be free who makes his fellow-man his slave?
Is free the nation where the sound of war
Is heard, a sight of desolation seen?—
No more than is he wise who strives to stunt
The growth of knowledge, and would fain confine
To his own breast, all science and all art.

Where is a spirit of monopoly,—
In whatsoever bosom, rank, or state
'Tis found,—knows not that bosom, rank, or state,
True freedom,—but in slavery, itself

Is held, in bondage stern, in durance vile.
Then why of liberty should mortal talk
As resident on earth—since Adam's fall?
Vain, idle boast! false glory! poor award
For loss of his own freedom!—As the heir
To earthly wealth and titles, when no act
Of his can gain him notice, rests his fame
Upon his fathers',—and imputes the deeds
Of many generations to himself;
Forgetful that they nothing worthy had
Of preservation,—that their fame was sin.

For loss of his own freedom!—But 'tis said
By others, that their freedom is not lost;
That in their constitution, 'tis as pure,
Unviolated, as in Paradise,
Or Greece and Rome; the latter, 'tis most
true,
They equal,—but the former ne'er can
reach,
On earth,—if haply they attain to heaven,
Where only in perfection 'tis preserved.

But where are they the mighty who have grasped
With their own hand, the phantom? have endued
It with a living soul, and to the earth
The sweets of civil liberty rebrought,
The presence of the Spirit of our God?
Where and who are they? Many have preferred
Their proud pretensions, but to Britain's sons,
And those from them proceeding, may the palm
For purest liberty be given, that on earth
Has flourished since the fall. Of Britain's sons
Then take I cognizance, since they are deemed
Earth's freest; and my song shall prove that Earth
Freedom has not;—her freest born are slaves.
Britain a land of liberty? O, speak,
Ye martyrs for your nation's cause, ye slain
Your country's rights defending from the rude
And wanton violence, and lawless scourge,
And heavy yoke, and burdens wearisome,
Imposed by her to whom your eyes elate
Were wont to be when succour and support
Were needed by your state's weak infancy;—
By her imposed,—to whom had clung your heart,

Bound by affection's strongest ties, by bonds
Of language, manners, similarity
Of thought and feeling, mutual interests
In commerce, and relationship in blood ;—
By her from whom you sprung, from whom derived
Your being.—Can a mother then forget
Her sucking-child, that she should feel nor love
Nor pity for the offspring of her womb ?——
By her imposed, whose boast through all the lands,
The nations of the earth, it is,—that she
Hath sucked the breasts of freedom, eat the bread
Of freedom, and that through her body flows
A vital stream of liberty ; by her
Imposed, the queen of nations,—not self-called
Alone, but titled thus with loud acclaim
By an astonished world ;—a mighty Queen,—
Needing, it thence would seem, no wider spread
Of power, no increased extent of wealth
And sov'reignty, no weight of consequence
Superior to her present dignity,
Her lofty bearing ;—yes, by her imposed,
On whom Jehovah, ever bountiful,

Had showered blessings as the morning dew
Thick-spread,—towards whom he had exercised
Patience, forbearance marvellous, and love
Astonishing, as proved in warnings oft,
Mild chastenings, and promises and threats;
And unto whom he gave his gospel's sun
To shine with brightness nearer to perfection
And more uninterrupted, than on aught
Besides of his Creation infinite;
And why ?—that from her fulness she might give
A portion,—give, yet losing not,—dispense
The glorious beams of heav'nly truth from pole
To pole,—from rising to the setting sun ;—
By her imposed, by Britain. Speak ye then,
Ye martyrs for your nation's cause, ye slain
Your country's rights defending from the sword
Unjustly raised, the green-eyed jealousy
Of Britons,—and proclaim those Britons, slaves.
A tyrant's bosom hides a slavish heart.

Nor must be thought this Age is wiser, taught
By past experience fatal, that to live

In freedom, man must ever live in love.
Alike, from east and west of Britain cries
Are hourly wafted o'er the ocean's breast
By gales of heav'n indignant, to her ear,
For mercy and for justice like refused.
But oh! my harp! how can I sing the shame
Of Britain? how declare her crimes? how tell
Of brethren carried from their homes,—their all
Of happiness destroyed,—their country left
Far in the distant wave, while they are borne
To other countries, other climes,—there forc'd
By blows man would not offer to his beast,
By threats,—than which hell's promise scarce were
worse,—
By curses, oaths, and lacerated flesh
And nameless other cruelties, to till
The ground on which they were not born; to rear
The plant for which they care not, and whose
worth
They ne'er receive;—sufficient just to keep
Their life within them,—is their own, no more;
To sweat and wear away that life for whom

They love not,—that their tyrants may enjoy
The fruits of their hard labour,—rendered rich
And grateful to their palate, by the thought
Of all the stripes and sufferings and woes
And ignominy that the slaves endured,
To gratify their carnal appetite.
Such in the Western Indies is the state
Of men,—of brethren though in colour chang'd,
The Briton from the Afric ;—as the sun
The fruit makes darker which remains exposed
To noontide warmth, than that which lies concealed

In shade impenetrable ;—brethren both,—
Sons of one parent, bearing visibly
Alike, God's image on their front ; alike
Their form, their senses, appetites, and lusts,
Their wants, their reason ;—all alike but hue
And power ;—and the Briton's heart is black
As is the Afric's outside,—he within,
Comparatively pure ;—and for the power
The Briton has superior, has the black
The greater feeling, more humanity,

More meekness, patience, virtue,—and is viewed
By God, with wrath less hot, with far more
love.

Nor doth the Eastern India make appeal
Less loud, less forcible ; atrocity
May perhaps shun the noontide splendour there,—
Dark outrage, the meridian sun ;—but groans,
The voice of kings and people dispossess'd
Of country, justice, wealth, and,—though the
last

Mentioned, the dearest to the soul of man,—
Their independence and their liberty,—
The voice of kings and people, bowed by yoke
Of strangers whom they know not, of a land
That felt no injury from them ;—the voice
Of millions of immortal souls, of minds
That must endure through all eternity,
Soliciting of fellow-men the rights
Made free by God to all—for all ordained,—
Are wafted ceaseless to the British shores,
To British ears, but not to British hearts.

These far-famed sons of freedom boasting tell
Of Indian tyrants slain, dislodged, through whose
Oppression and abuse of pow'r, and foul
Extortion, were the people sunk in slavery ;—
By them dislodg'd ;—but better far the sway
Of native tyrants, native conquerors,
Than that of strangers to them barbarous,
Far distant and unknown, or never known
But as the lawless victors, as a horde
Of restless, avaricious despots, men
Whose ruling passion is the spirit malign
Of lust of power and of wealth.—Alas !
My country ! slavish souls are sons of thine.

But hark ! I hear another sound distinct,
Across the Western Sea ;—from Canada,
Majestic province ! grand and wondrous work,
And beautiful as grand, of God Almighty.
But 'tis not like the others, a shrill cry,
A plaintive pray'r for freedom ; these are not,
Like Afric's sons, or India's, crushed beneath,
The tyrant's yoke, as brutes and not as men

Considered ;—mortals they are deemed by sons
Of Britain, though unworthy still of full
And free participation in the rights
Of Britain's subjects ;—why unworthy ? why
Unequal to their brethren of the East ?
The rous'd Canadian knows not ; and of strength
And arms, and power possess'd, he utters not
A plaintive pray'r for freedom, but demands,
With tone indignant, and a low-breathed threat,
A restoration to all nature's rights !

And what says Britain ?—With a jealous eye
Fixed full and steadfast on the blooming land,
The free and independent states, once her's,—
Till, wearied of the proud tyrannic rule
They cast it from them,—with an eye full fixed
On these self-liberated, ancient slaves,
A bosom that still beats with humbled pride,
Unvented spleen, and mortifying shame
At her defeat, till then unheard of, loss
Of empire vast, of what to her had been
Most dear, the brightest jewel of her crown ;

And, with a heart untutor'd by the past,
Still proud and haughty, obstinate and vain,
Inflexible to counsel, by reproof
Unsoftened, by demands and pray'rs unmoved,
Untouched, and by her punishments unwarned,—
She turns to the Canadian's loud complaints
An unstopped ear,— and to his low-breathed threats—
Low but alarming, awful, deep, and full,—
The jeer deriding and the laugh of scorn.

O Britain! thou who standest so secure
In thine own might, to thine own power trusting,—
Take heed and ponder, that thou fallest not.
Laugh on, and take thy fill of joy while joy
And smiles remain,—while thou hast pow'r to laugh;
Aye, revel in thy bliss, while bliss is thine
And thou canst revel; for afar I see
In the horizon's outskirts, half-obscur'd
By hazy mists impervious by the sight,
A seeming speck, portending, O my land!
My country! thy humiliation deep,
Thy slavery, thy fall; unless thou turn

'Thee from thy evil ways,——repent and live.
Like the approach of prowling midnight thief
Deceitful, shall it come, unseen, unheard.
Thou in thy bed shalt lie thee down in peace,
But wake in sadness sorrowful; thy laugh
Shall turn to weeping, and to grief thy joy,—
To slavery thy vaunted freedom;—dust
Shall be thy garments,—ashes be thy bed,—
Thy meat affliction,—and thy tears thy drink—
And marred shall be thy beauty; so despoiled,
That even thy familiar friends shall pass
And know thee not;—while they, thine enemies,
To scorn shall laugh thee, shall revile thy state,
Mock at thy fallen grandeur and thy pride
Reproach,—and tread thy glory under foot.
Be wise! avert the evil day, and live.

Nor need alone her colonies reform;
Her colonies! whence came the title? why
Should man not govern his own residence,
Nor grovel in subjection to a power
From him divided by the ocean's width,

Appointed bound ? Th' Almighty gave man ships
And taught him navigation, that he might
Exchange the superfluity of fruits
Proceeding from his labours, in the way
Of honest commerce ; exercising thus
His industry and patience, showing him
Great wonders marvellous, and th' intercourse
Of man facilitating with his kind,
To prove a mutual pleasure, mutual aid
Through all their journey heaven-wards ;—but chief
That knowledge might be spread ;—all arts
And science fit for man to learn,—above
All other knowledge, that of God, His love,
His mercy to a guilty world ; that thus
His glory might Creation celebrate.

How has Man used the giver and the gift ?—
Insulted one,—the other, by abusing ;
Has prostituted what the giver meant
A blessing, to promulgate discord rude
And war and bloodshed,—to make freemen slaves ;
And all for lust of wealth and pride of rule.

Yet will he tell you 'tis to civilize
The savage nations,—knowledge to impart,
And holy, Christian principles t' instil
And true religion, that he mars their peace,
Their land invades, their homes makes bare
And fills them with his people;—on them lays
A yoke of iron, brands them slaves to him,
And rules them ever with a despot's rod.
To civilize the savage? To impart
To him the Christian doctrine, which himself
Hath never known, and that he cares not for?
'Twere better that the blind should still remain
Firm in his ignorance, than take for guide,
A fellow blind, a fellow ignorant;—
Then both shall fall:—they do,—to rise no more.

To civilize the savage? What by sight
Of rude barbarity, inhuman so,
That not a brute could see but must recoil?
Better be darkness than a meteor's light;—
And such is that to pagan nations held
By which they see their filthiness, their state

So fallen, so degraded,—but which leads
Them into filthiness more filthy still,
Sinks them yet lower in the mighty scale
Of nature ; from the rank of fallen men,—
The rank and punishment,—degrading them
To those of perjured Christians. Bad is she,
Who from her education and the modes
And fashions of her country and her age,
Conceives that duty calls her to the flame
Which burns her husband, that they ne'er may
part,—

Then follows where her duty calls, and dies ;—
But worse beyond all measure is the wretch,
Who taught by God's revealed will, the Book
Inspir'd by heav'n to tell his erring race
How he may find acceptance with his Judge,—
Who, by this transcript of the will Divine,
Taught that what sorrow or afflicting smart
Soever may assail him here below,
Submissive must he be and humbled lie,—
Yet proudly murmurs at the pain, presumes
To curse the just decree,—and vows to die

And bear no more ;—and hastens to the brink
All breathless,—rash, uncalculating man !—
And God and justice daring, plunges deep
Into the ocean of eternity.

And horrid and heart-sick'ning must it be
To view a group,—each individual
Of which can boast a deathless mind,—to view
Them revelling upon their hellish feast,—
Hellish in practice and design,—but ah !
In nature human, mortal flesh and blood,—
Their eye-balls swimming in a maze of bliss,
Their nostrils wide-distended, and their frame
Lazy and slothful through the full repast ;—
Too horrid and heart-sick'ning must it be,
But not unequalled ;—no, 'tis far surpass'd !—
Recal a former picture ; him I mean
Who in one moment disenchanted all
The fairy dreams of love and happiness,
Which had been used the vision of his friend,—
His bosom friend,—to crowd ;—had bid them all
Be dissipated, for no longer pure

Was she the Fairy Queen, whose magic wand
Of beauty had created all so fair.
Now view the wretched husband ; lost to hope
And love and happiness, a blasted man,
Weary of life and lingering for death,
He challenges the base seducer, more
In hope of losing life, than causing death.
The other, fiend of hell ! appears as blest
And happy as his heart could wish ; he eats
And drinks and sleeps, and at the appointed morn
Walks forth as cheerful and as merrily
As the poor shepherd-boy, whose daily task
Calls him at the same hour. The parties meet,
They fire,—the husband falls,—and falling, dies :
The demon, still more happy than before,
More blithe and gay, declares himself in luck,
Departs the field and to the tavern hies ;
There to conclude a day in drunkenness,
Began with murder ;—to exhibit there
A scene more foul and terrible, a soul
More hardened and depraved and sunk in vice
Than is the spirit of a cannibal.

And deeply humbled should the spirit be,—
Humbled in dust and ashes, self-abas'd,—
That views a fellow human being, man
And rational as is himself, bow down
To stocks and stones, the work of his own hands.
To worship them, and adoration pay
To them his own created,—not to Him
His own Creator. Humbling must it be
To hear the priest of this idolatry,—
His spirit earnest, frantically sincere,—
Call on the praying crowds to sacrifice
Their limbs, their lives, upon the altar curs'd
Of Baal,—and to witness for their first
Example the insensate priest, who casts
His body to be crush'd beneath the car,
Followed by numbers of his willing flock.

Humbling indeed! what can be more so? what
Can tend to show more clearly mortals' fall?
Would that this were the worst; then man were free
From blacker darkness, practice more corrupt!—
But see a Christian Church! Behold the priest,

The man professedly devote of God
To speak, to act all righteousness ; attend
His cold address, his heartless speech, a form
Of godliness without the power ;—true,
Evil it teaches and inculcates not,—
But oh ! his life, his practice ;—in the Church
He has two objects, each of which possess
His close attention ;—one, to show himself,
His figure, and his graces, and his gifts,—
The other,—to conclude his services
With no delay :—without the Church, engross'd
His soul and body are alike ; to pleasure bound,—
To worldly pleasure, sensual joy,—himself
To please and pamper, worship, and adore.
Followed by numbers of his willing flock
Becomes the lying prophet, followed close ;—
Each serves himself, and makes himself the god
Of his idolatry ; before that shrine
He bows, and underneath the lusts which form
His throne, his car of state, is crushed his soul,
Crushing for ever in eternal death.
Which sight the spirit most humiliates ?

Doubtless the greater sinner ;—and 'tis he
The self-called Christian ;—Baal's prophets serve
In truth, their god !—Jehovah's serve Him not.

To civilize the savage ?—He may teach
Him arts and science, and commercial laws,
And nice fastidiousness of taste in dress
And food, and elegance of speech
In daily conversation, and the use
Of weapons to destroy the life of man
In greater prodigality ;—but ah !
With them he teaches shuffling and deceit
And theft and falsehood, and a foolish pride
The body in arraying, luxury,
Drunkenness, dissipation, and the waste
Of the Almighty's blessings, and the use
Of the Almighty's holy, blessed name
In wantonness and daring blasphemy.
To civilize the savage ?—Him to make
Like to himself, barbarian ! man 'accurs'd !
The laugh of devils ! and the foe to God !

A nation by Jehovah's goodness blest

With such increase of people, that the land
With numbers overflows to whom her breast
Can furnish not supply of daily food,
May cross the ocean and explore the vast
Unpeopled Continent, and settle there ;
But uninhabited should be the land
On which they settle ; why should they disturb
A race there planted by the hand of God ?—
And settle there ;—and for their first supplies
Draw on their Mother-Country, who should give
To them, her laws, her government, and rule
Mildly their infant weakness ;—till in time,
Through diligence and industry, they feel
Able to stand alone, and need no more
The watchful guardianship and fost'ring care
Of her, their parent ;——She should then resign
To their own hands their proper government,
And thus resigning will she gain a friend,
A brother, to her bound by ev'ry tie
Of nature, obligation, fervent love.
Whereas, by holding still a tightened rein
When that her offspring has become mature
In vigour and at manhood has arrived,

She treats that offspring as a slave, and makes
A foe where once she might have gained a friend.

O Britain ! that thou could'st be warned ! that thou
Might'st hear of what concerns thy peace, might'st
learn

To practise justice, virtue, and to walk
Humbly with God ! O that thou would'st reform
Thy colonies, and on them that bestow
Which thou would'st loudly claim as thine own right
Were thou the junior, and the parent they !

Nor need alone her Colonies reform ;—
Corrupt is her own nature, in her breast
She generates the seeds of slavery,
There nourishes them, and in secret loves !
Or rather 'tis the roots ;—for in her isle
Once flourished slavery, a mighty tree
Whose roots sucked all the nourishment, and left
All other plants supportless,—and whose leaves
And thick-twined branches covered her above,
Deprived her of the vivifying rays

Of freedom's sun, and made her live and breathe
In grossest darkness, foul, polluting air.
But there arose,—by God the Spirit moved,—
A race of heroes wonderful, who strove
With giant strength, the deadly, cursed tree
To tear away, that Freedom's glorious sun
Might shine in all its fulness on her head,
And that her breast, of the vast roots depriv'd,
Might with fertility abound;—and strove
In part successful! for they snapped the trunk
And bore away the branches, but the roots
Too deep were in her bosom to be forced
From thence by human strength:—they still are
there,
Though drawing not so much of nourishment
Since that the mighty tree itself was dead.

And now 'twas hoped the sun of liberty
Would shine supreme;—but oh! that heart of man!
That self-willed, obstinate, ungrateful thing!
Men fancied not the change, or liked a part
Alone;—the rest breathed forth their loud complaints

Incessant, and produced a lurid fog
Of suffocating prejudice, that hid
The dawning splendour from their mortal sight:—
This still obscures it, ever will obscure,
While that the roots of slavery are found
Within earth's bosom: for so wedded seem
These sons of folly to their ancient ways,
The forms and custom of the olden time,
That 'tis their chief employment, the delight
That warms their hearts, these roots to cultivate
And watch and nurse;—and ever and anon
A new plant rises from the ground, and shoots
Its stem amidst fair wisdom's tender shrubs,
Its branches intermingles, and its juice
Sprinkles and soaks within the fairer fruit,—
That heedless mortals while they gather one,
Too frequent suck the poison of the other.

The metaphor to drop:—Is free the land
Where dwells a spirit of monopoly,
Of avarice insatiable, that grasps,
Unsatisfied for ever, at the whole

Of whatsoever it may be, whose part
His property and substance constitutes?
Nor grasps alone,—but ev'ry means employs,
Or fair or foul, dishonest or upright,
That works consistent for this one chief end?
Is free the land where numbers oft appeal,—
Forced by the lust of wealth which fills the hearts
Of them whose duty 'tis to cultivate
The soil, and who, to load the more their purse
Already overflowing, strive to raise
The price of corn, of labour to depress,—
Is free the land, where numbers thus oppress'd
Are often heard appealing to the ears
And hearts of countrymen, are often seen,—
Stirred up the fiercer passions of the soul,—
Dark in rebellion, threat'ning discord rude,—
That to their famishing necessities
Bread may be given, bread, the staff of life?

Is free the land where justice is delay'd,
Till suitors wearied and the bone of strife
Corrupted, mouldered into nothing,—law

And justice like become the scorn, the jest,
The by-word amongst men,—and he a fool
Is stigmatised, who justice vain pursues ?
Is the land free, where justice, that should flow
Unpriced, unpurchased and gratuitous,
Frequent involves the ruin of the man
Who wished to taste the stream ! demands
His little all to satisfy the wants
Of its own agents ! Is the nation free,
Whose bloody edicts fatal death award,—
Death, the forerunner but too oft alas !
Of the soul's death that never, never dies,—
To him who signs another's name and robs
His neighbour of a trifling, scarce missed sum,—
While he, whose fraud whole families has brought
To ruin, poverty and wordly shame,
Escapes unpunished, or but punished so
As makes the crime more frequent ; till the world
Accustomed to the horror, blames it not,
Then laughs at, flatters, courts, receives, and loves ?
Is free the land, where he, the man of peace
And quiet, whom the thought of war makes sick,

For that so low his fellows should have fallen
As to deprive each other of the gift
Of life, so precious, time already short,—
And who contented fain would be to walk
His earthly course unnoticed and unknown,—
Is torn by ruthless ruffian from his home
So sweet, his wife, his infant babes so dear,
Constrained the ocean's fearful depths to cross,
And scenes of bloodshed and despair to view,
At which a stouter heart than his has wept?
And if, perchance, an opportunity
Should offer for escape,—before him swim
Visions of love and peace and rapture bright,—
And he should dare the deed so perilous,
And fly, and be retaken,—is that land
A land of freedom, which ordains his back
To feel the smart, the man-degrading scourge?
Then heaps upon him hardships, harder more
Than he has ever borne, beheld, conceived?

Are free the people,——though they proudly boast
Their Constitution's purity, their fair

Impartial Senate,—when the rich alone
And they of middle station, can elect
“The nation’s representatives?” can choose
Their rulers, and in consequence their laws?—
Or haply if a vote become the lot
Of one of lower station, is he free,
Threatened by frowning landlord with a rise
Of rental or a forfeiture of lease
Unless he force his conscience,—Conscience turns
Ever, as does the magnet to the pole,
Where reason points,—and vote as he directs?

Injustice is not freedom ;—then is free
The nation governed by a senate made
By bribery, corruption, violence,
Perjury, persecution and the like?
Let not some say “we chose them ; we enjoy’d
The right of choice and used our privilege
In that direction which rewarded most?”
Away with argument so weak, such vain
And shallow sophistry and notions false.
Justly obtained or by injustice, still

They had the power in the people's name
Of making choice of whom should represent
Their will and wishes ;—and that people may
In right demand and should in right receive
Full proof that the election made was just,
Upright and free :—or otherwise are they
Of freedom cheated,—sunk in slavery.

These are in part the grosser ills that lurk
In Britain's constitution, and proclaim
Her free-born children, grov'ling, servile slaves.—
But press the subject farther ; try the rule
Of holy Scripture,—judge who cannot err,
Infallible criterion : “ Where dwells
God's Spirit, there is freedom ;—” And the proofs
Convincing of his presence, are the fruits
Ripened by his warm rays, his glad'ning beams ;
By name, “ long-suff'ring, gentleness and love,
Meekness and goodness, peace and faith and joy
And temperance,—affections crucified
And lusts and all vain-glory, envy, pride,
Idolatry, sedition, heresy,

Uncleanness, hatred, malice and revenge,"—
This is the Spirit's fruit, the consequence
Of his indwelling presence, which alone
Can constitute and form true liberty.
Britain ! my country ! is thy freedom such ?
Is such the spirit of thy present Age ?
Are such thy forms, thy customs ? Art thou pure,
And sanctified to serve the Lord thy God ?
Alas ! my country, deeply I lament
Thy darkness, and thy pride of heart deplore,—
Scorn thy pretended freedom, scorn yet feel
For thy delusion,—and thy punishment
Will seek by pray'r to hinder or delay.

Nor thine alone ; the cradle-bed wert thou
My infancy was hushed in,—but the earth
Was mine abode, my country, and the spot
My spirit lived in ;—and her free-born sons
Became my breth'ren wheresoever found,
Of what condition, colour or degree,
Th' Almighty made them ; breth'ren dear were they,
Beloved and pitied yet denounced and warn'd.

Dear were they?—dear they are,—and dear shall be
While Mercy's gate is open,—while they may
Reside in my affections,—while I dare
Uplift an eye to God's Omnipotence,
Breathe a petition to Him or let fall
Tearful oblation on behalf of them,
My breth'ren, my companions in the flesh.

Theresa, sister!—in my prayer join,—
And suffer to His throne of sov'reign grace
T' ascend united our full songs of praise
And gratitude and love,—for mercy shown
To us.—Nor better can we Him extol,
Than by entreating the same mercy's show'rs
To cleanse and sanctify our race, to save
And perfect them. Then be thou still, my harp.

BOOK V.

LONG time their pray'rs ascended to the throne
Of the Most High ;—their prayers and their praise ;—
A holy song of adoration, breathed
From spirits pure and trusting ;—not aloud
Rehearsed, but in the melting harmony
Of silence, from their souls expiring ; one
Devout and hallowed vapour, intermixed
So intimately were their thoughts, their hopes
And their affections :—such communion blest,
Such freely flowing interchange of soul
Have seraph saints in heaven.

May I there,

O God, partake such fellowship, enjoy
Such perfect comprehension ;—where no word
Shall be misunderstood,—suspected not
A hidden motive,—no desire conceal'd 4
Through affectation, peevishness or shame,—
No thought withheld, no sentiment retained
Offence and discord to prevent,—no sound
But that of fervent, universal love.

There may I enter, O my God, all free 20
From earthly dust corrupting, free from pain
Of body, friendless solitude of mind,
From brooding care, suspicion and distrust,
And sensitiveness, peace-destroying thing !
And envy, passion, and fell discord's crash, 25
And rumours of commotions fierce, and wars
Destructive,—and the sight of so much sin
And blasphemy and pride,—all pure and free.

All pure and free as were the blended souls
Of Lucius and Theresa ;—in the height 26
Of happiness indulging :—for their God

Pleased with the incense offered of their praise,
In spirit mingled with them,—and effused
Abundance still more copious of His peace,—
His peace,—peculiar privilege of Heaven
When in perfection, far beyond the reach
Of mortals,—past the soaring of their thoughts.

My earthly harp would fain attempt, but fails
To sing their rapture, to repeat their bliss.
To what shall it be likened? What of earth
Can be compared to things of highest heaven?
Yet must I stoop to earth, for simile
Gathered from heaven's regions would but make
Incomprehensible the more obscure;
And farther from our mortal sight remove
The theme that sight would see and comprehend.

Then must imagination keep below,
If that to earth-born I would tell of joys
In heav'n created and in heav'n possess'd;
And to my recollection is there brought
No view, no prospect fairer, more of peace

Possessing, —than a scene I once beheld
In early youth ;—a simple scene it was,
And that to many visions would have borne
No sentiment peculiar; to mine own 50
At other moments, vacant had it been
Perchance; but when I saw, my mind was ripe,
Was fitted to enjoy it ;—and the stamp
Its simple beauties there imprinted, deep
Remains as ever.

'Twas an autumn eve,
And I had wandered from my home to taste 60
The freshened breeze, and let my thoughts indulge
Themselves at will,—at pleasure wander wild.—
Ah! I was happy then and free from care ;
Not sick and weary of the world and loath
To taste its pleasures, thoughtful of the thorns 65
United, but in rapture with the earth
And all things in it,—all men thinking good,
All women angels, and all nature fair.
No wonder while I stroll'd, that in my heart
Were any feeling otherwise than grief: 70
Nor that before me flitted visions bright

Of coming transport, love's endearments,—love,
The phantom of each youthful breast, my own
Far other than exempted,—future bliss
With wealth, contentment, virtue, and with her.— 75

Such was my musing when I reached the shore
And touched the mighty waters, then outspread
In glass-like surface, motionless ; or moved
At intervals alone, when blew a gale
Of gentleness across them ; then they seemed 80
Plaited with folds innumerable, small
But regular—Above was seen the sky,
Deep azure, cloudless, studded beautiful
With countless stars of splendour, that appeared
More bright than common, while the virgin moon 85
Just rising from her chaste, unruffled bed,
Cast over all the charm of female grace.

Nor was I haunted by the busy hum
Of mortals ;—for behind me lay the town
Unseen, and its inhabitants unheard :— 90
One man alone was present, whom I bribed

To take me in his little vessel, far
From land, that on the wond'rous sea, alone
And still, my soul might revel in her joy.
And it did revel in a feast as pure 95
And exquisite, as soul unsanctified
Hath ever shared. It seemed no more of earth
But of a world beyond, all bliss, all love
Emphatic, infinite.—'Twas not a glimpse
A fore-taste, but it seemed reality, 100
Secure possession, rapture positive,
With virtue, happiness, content, and her.—
A tumult of delight it was; but like
Aught else excessive, short-lived and producing
A corresponding melancholy, when 105
Departed;—and the owner of the bark,—
A weather-beaten mariner, whose head
Was sprinkled with the snow of fifty years,
Whose eye had lost all bright vivacity
And active motion, and whose callous heart 110
Nor knew soft love, nor sympathised with those
Who were acquainted,—nor perceived a charm
Romantic in a midnight stroll across

The lovely waters in a moonlight hour,
He, weary of the solitude, aroused
His musing passenger, and veered his course
Homewards;—and thus to sure reality
Recalled me, disappointed sore and vexed
At such intrusion;—but I grieved not long,
For at a little distance I perceived
What to my swimming vision had been lost,
Piercing futurity,—a scene of peace
Delightful, heavenly,—so at least it seemed
To my disturbed and passion-swollen breast;
A peace far preferable to the rush
Of full-tide happiness;—a placid calm
All sweet, secure and lasting, far beyond
The whirl of transport, in my estimate.

And yet, 'twas very simple;—nothing more
Than the reflection in the ocean's face
Transparent, of the now far-risen moon,
In virgin purity majestic;—while
At humble distance, myriads of stars
As chaste attendant damsels, shone around.

I have beheld and fondly kissed the cheek 135
Of cherub beauty, innocently lying
In balmy slumber on its mother's breast :—
And I have watched the beacon as it spread
Its warning light the distant circle round,
The only light amidst a darkness black 140
As chaos ;—and I have with joy perceived
A small appearance of the azure blue,
Surrounded by its mantle thick of clouds
And tempests ; —and I have indulg'd an hour
Of vacant listlessness, the verdant bank 145
Of quiet stream with rippling harmony
Saunt'ring along ;—or the extended sands
Of giant Ocean, on whose heaving breast
Reclined were many goodly vessels ; some
Besides, with noiseless step and light 150
As earth's fair maidens, following their course :—
These have I seen and thought them peaceful, all
Fit emblems of the soul's eternal rest :
And death too have I witnessed ;—the cold face
Of budding boyhood, —hope and joy was he 155
Of anxious parents, —smitten by the dart

Of death, before his soul was tainted, touched
By vice, by grief embittered :—but my heart
To this lone Autumn scene more fondly clings,
Recur more frequent as the portraiture 166
Of peace celestial, than to all beside.

Ah ! well ;—those times are pass'd ;—the scene is
chang'd !

And love disdain'd, and friendships broken off
By treachery, and hopes of worldly fame
And worldly riches, disappointed,—since 167
Have been my portion.—But 'twas good, 'twas best !
Affliction was the rod which drove me home
To God my Maker,—which hath taught my soul
To settle not its trust on earth or sons
Of earth, to yield sufficient happiness 170
To satisfy its wants, its vast desires,—
But to ascend to heav'n, and to the Rock
Of Ages cling for life, for happiness.—
Then murmur not, my spirit ; that is best
Which God, all wisdom, hath for thee appointed ;— 171
And more of peace, thou know'st,—of heav'nly peace

Is now thy lot,—although earth's bounty yields
No friend, no fellow to thee, and no breast
Made happy by thy love,—no fond return
Of pure affection from a virgin soul,—
Yet more of heav'nly peace, thou know'st, is thine
At present, than when tumult filled thy heart,
Of visions of enchantments earthly born.

But whither have I wandered in my song
Digressing?—Rise again, my soul, from earth,—
And thou, my harp-strings, be attuned with notes
Worthy to celebrate discourse of heav'n ;—
And sing what passed when they, the happy souls
All pure and sanctified, their notice bent
Again from their high state, to things below.

“ Tell me again of freedom, brother ; sing,
If that there be such, of those sons of men
Who all of candour have not banish'd quite.”

Candour, Theresa ?—thus resumed the bard
His song, with his own music fitly join'd,—

Candour! Theresa?—'Tis, as once I heard 46
 On earth, from lip of holy minister inspir'd
 And touched by the blest spirit of our God, —
 A false, deceitful monster, with a face
 All open and serene,—a form, divine
 At first appearance, light, transparent, cloth'd 200
 With garments seeming wash'd and pure, and free
 From all defilement,—while from off her tongue
 Slip soft and honied words, whose only aim
 Appears to temper rugged passions, calm
 Fierce controversy's warfare, smoothly plain 205
 The many difficulties in the way,
 Sure credence in the oracles of God,
 His truth, his righteousness of gaining;—gained,
 More firmly of confirming.—She will speak
 Of charity, and love, and openness, 210
 And liberality,—till oft deceived
 By softly flowing phrases, sentiments
 But little current with the mass of men,—
 Suspecting never that a form so fair
 Could hide a serpent's heart,—and ever fresh 215
 And eager for a change,—th' enraptured man

Forbids not her advances, but in close
 Embrace draws the fond treasure to his heart :—
 And hugs the stone-like Infidelity.

And what is the result?—Her freezing touch 254
 His senses paralyses oft, and leaves
 His soul no power to regain the course
 It left ;—his heart for ever petrifies :—
 Or he perchance escapes, with conscience, sense
 And reason just sufficient to perceive 258
 His fatal error ;—then remorse, despair,
 Seize on his spirit ;—lost to hope, he flies
 Headlong to horror,—hurries deep in sin.—
 But few who clasp her, ever safe return ;—
 But they can tell her terrors, and describe 262
 Her fatal secrets. Their first kiss of love,
 The moisture of their burning breath, destroys
 The glowing colours of her painted face ;—
 Her garments, like the poison'd berry, glare 266
 In beauty, but disease communicate ;—
 Her rounded form is as the chisell'd marble,—
 And from her lips, in secret, blasphemy

And vice and irreligion and the whole
That constitute a man's defilement, breathe.

Such is this vaunted candour ;—fatal snare 240
For Britain's youth ; for 'tis in Britain's isle
She chiefly dwells ;—though Europe's continent
Teems with her victims, echoes with her slain.—

Fools ! fools ! whom can they censure but themselves ?
Can she who wants the brightest female grace, 245
The most attractive virtue,—Modesty,—
Be pure, be worthy of devoted love ?
Truth, though she shun not mortals, nor avoid
Their gaze, their admiration, nor reject
Their love,—is ever “ conscious of her worth, 250
And will be woo'd, and not unsought be won ;”
But Falsehood, like the harlot, courts the eye
Of lust, the wanton, riotous embrace ;
Solicits notice, clothes her with a dress
And freely sports a title,—not her own :— 255
As is the parent, so the child ;—and she
The mother is, of Infidelity.

Assertions prove but little ;—let me then
Examine her more closely, and inspect
The doctrines which she teaches ;—thus shall Truth
More brightly shine, and specious sophistry
Become unravelled, falsehood be expos'd.

And what then are her doctrines ? To the youth
Whose life has hitherto been spent without
Religion, but who of its vast import 266
Convinced, is wishing to establish firm,
Right views of Christianity, a creed
That shall exalt him to eternal bliss,—
Or unto him, who wearied by the strifes,
Dissensions, persecutions, and in short, 270
The any thing but charity and love
And strict conformity to what their lips
Profess in public, which too oft are found
Among the self-called Christians,—to such men
Attracted by her seeming beauty, won 275
By her false flattering phrases, who apply
To her, in trust that where there can be found
Such harmony and peace, is nothing wrong,—

She smiling whispers, " Why confide at all
 In forms and vain divisions made by men 240
 Of wrangling spirit?—Let them waste their breath
 Establishing their subtle theories,
 Solving their dark enigmas, or the mists
 Of hidden things and secret mysteries
 Attempting to disperse ;—the vain dispute 245
 Leave thou ;—for vanity indeed it is,
 Disputing of what never can be proved
 On earth to full conviction ;—leave the field
 Of controversy theological,
 Since that the combatants when heated, seem 250
 Not satisfied with the clear evidence
 Of strength superior, but long to strike
 A death-blow at their brother, such an one
 That might annihilate all feeling,—not
 That feeling quicken with the conscious smart, 255
 Arising from a sense of weakness ;—leave
 The atmosphere which does insinuate
 Malignance, jealousy and hate ; sure proof
 That in it mingles the dread curse of God,
 And not His Spirit of subduing love ;— 260

Leave,—figurative language set aside,—
All creeds, all theories, all subtle views
That harbour in themselves dissensions fierce,—
That man can controvert,—that all t' approve
Refuse.—The true Religion is the one 25
Which breathes most love, most Charity and most
Benevolence and sympathy ;—then leave,
Give to the winds the doctrines which exist
Alone, and ne'er existed but with strife
And animosity combined.—In short, 30
Let nature be your teacher ; faithful guide
Is she, whom no one rational can charge
With fallacy or falsehood ; where she leads
May all men follow safely, tempted not
To swerve from what she teaches, nor enchain'd 35
By foul suspicion that she leads them wrong ;—
They know she cannot ; and with pleasure find
That they who follow her, forsaking all
The fanciful delusions, and the dreams
Fond, superstitious, of a credulous 320
And self-deceiving world,—enjoy true peace
Among themselves, not interspersed with wars

And strugglings for superiority
 In matters of religion,—but a peace
 All uniform and constant, without end
 Or fear of interruption.—This is truth.”

Thus she with specious words sophistical
 Allures the youth unwary; and he hears
 Delighted, and still more delighted finds
 No falsehood in her argument, and naught
 But a free spirit of a glowing love.
 Yet still, a natural distrust withholds
 His full consent from all her axioms, or
 From all the sense deducible therefrom;—
 And cautious, half afraid, yet eager more
 For satisfaction, he enquires if all
 These varied enemies are wrong,—if none
 Have truth for the foundation of their scheme.

She, treacherous, dissimulator arch,
 Prying discernor, answers,—“all are wrong
 Who fancy that themselves alone are right;—
 And also they are wrong, who having fixed

Their creed, persuaded firmly of its truth,
Yet live in opposition to the rules
It dictates, unconforming to its will :— 345
But they, of whatsoever sect they be,—
What principles soever they have formed
As the direction of their conduct, or
What fancies e'ersoever they uphold,—
So that these fancies, principles, or sects 350
Are not against th' unalterable laws
Of Nature, in array,—and while their life
Their actions, their example, and their speech,
Agree in beautiful conformity
With all that conscience, Reason, Nature prompt,—355
They, I affirm, who thus their credence form,
And thus exalt it by consistent life,
Are never, never wrong ; “ they can't be wrong
Whose life is in the right ; ”—and God hath said,
“ That which soever is not born of faith, 360
Is sin ;—unclean is nothing of itself,
But unto him who thinketh it unclean ; ”
“ And he who doubting still performs, is damned.”
“ Then do ye persevere and follow close

Those things which charity produce, which tend 345
To edifying and to mutual gain."

False sorceress! deceitful, hellish fiend !
Perjured and lying prophetess ! the snare
Invented by hell's most apostate, most
Dark, deep, designing plotter, to entrap 350
The unsuspecting heart of Britain's youth !—
O could they hear me,—could they but perceive
With clear perception, what my vision sees ;—
But ah ! they have the Bible ; let them search
Its pages, oft too unfrequented,—search 355
With lowly prostrate heart, and humbly asking
The Holy Spirit's guidance, them to lead
Into all truth and righteousness ;—not search
With eye quick glancing to discern if aught
There may be, promise which affords of hold 360
For the sharp hook of cavilling ;—nor search,
Determined still to be dissatisfied
With the immortal oracle's response,
If that it be against the fleshly arm
Of carnal reason, vain philosophy ;— 365

Nor heedless search, applying to the whole
Thoughtless, what God ordained to rule a part,—
Nor to a part confining that which God
Spread over all things and all men; but search,
As seeks the weary traveller the road 290
Straight homewards, out of the intricate maze,
The dark and clueless labyrinth in which
His erring feet have wandered ;—let them search
Thus ceaseless, eager, hopeful and sincere ;—
And they shall find, recorded in an Age 295
Long passed away, a prophecy, foretelling
Of teachers false who privily should bring
Within the Church, heresies damnable,
Even denying Christ who bought them,—men
Deceiving with great swelling words,—with lust 400
Alluring them, and sin, and wantonness,
And all pernicious ways ;—and promising
True freedom, while themselves the servants are,
The bond-slaves of corruption ;—brutish beasts,
And spots, and blemishes, and fruitless trees 405
Are they ; and moistless wells and darkened clouds
Whirling with ev'ry tempest,—wand'ring stars

Reserved for black destruction, raging waves
 Foaming their own, their everlasting shame,
 Are they ; complainers, murmurers, and false 410
 And filthy dreamers, and accursed of God,
 And destined to destruction on themselves
 Drawn down from Heaven's Justice by their wresting,
 Unstable and unlearned, the words of life.

And they shall find engraven on each page 415
 Of Scripture, truth and wisdom, like to this :
 " He that believeth shall be saved ;"—in what
 Believeth ?—Not in any thing which Man
 In the vain exercise of reason, wills
 Himself and forces to believe ;—but in 420
 The Son of God must constant dwell his faith,—
 A faith that nature teaches not, nor all
 The boasted lights of reason and of conscience,
 Farther than as they teach that God is Truth ;—
 And He hath sworn that they on whom hath shone 425
 The flame of revelation, shall be lost
 To all eternity, except they place
 Faith in God,—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,—

Unless their lives produce the fruit of faith
So given, so devoted,—piety 434
And holiness tow'rds God, and love to man.
'Tis not to whomsoever that exclaims
"Lord, Lord, to me thy heaven open," God
Gives a free entrance to eternal bliss ;
But 'tis to him who faithful does His will. 435

His will,—reveals the Bible ; there it shines
A light supreme upon the road to heav'n ;—
A road so straight, a light so beautiful,
That not the simple herd,—although a fool
In all that earth calls wisdom, most unwise 436
In aught but heaven's science, Man's salvation,—
And though upon the road he oft may meet
Roughness, unevenness, and many spots
Hard, difficult to cross,—still while his trust
In God remains unchanged, and while his eye 437
Steadfast continues fixed upon the truth,
Nor wavers, visionary phantoms thin
And man's and hell's delusions to pursue,
Nor turns to view himself, to praise, admire

And love his proper excellence, his own 450
 His native virtue,—while he thus is found,
 He shall not err, he shall not stumble,—all
 Shall gradually smooth and plain become ;
 Smooth and more smooth, and ever still more plain,
 Till he shall find himself at once upraised 455
 From glory unto glory,—to a place
 Secure, beyond the possibility
 Of danger, where is needed neither fear
 Nor caution, for the whole is perfect love ;—
 And love's perfection casteth out all fear. 460

And in that sacred book shall he who seeks
 Instruction, learn that of him 'tis required
 So to abound in views correct of truth
 And doctrine, that he capable may be
 Of answering the scoffer,—and to him 465
 Who asks, of giving reason for the hope
 That is within him, of eternal life.

“ But this,” says Candour, “ cannot be performed
 In love and meekness ;—though the book of God

May seem the basis, upon which is formed 470
The creed of one man, his opposer too
Rests his belief upon the same support:—
Then follow bitter animosities
And warm contentions; jealousy and hate
And malice are engendered,— and the theme 475
Of pure religion and the word of God
Are changed into arenas, where contend
Like devils, men possessing Christian love.”

Accomplished hypocrite! dissembler base!
Blasphemer perjured!—Let the truth of God 480
By men be undisputed, though they seem
Each one a liar.—Whoso doubts His truth,
Doubts His existence; ever one are both
And ever must be:—this established firm,
And that his word is changeless, powerless 485
Itself to contradict, man then would seek
For other source to argue whence proceed
Doubts and divisions among men, though each
May seem to wrest the holy oracle
His creed to justify.—From whence then flow 490

These evil sentiments pernicious ? whence ?—
 From God they cannot, then from man they must,
 And 'tis from man they do.—With ignorance
 And pride and vain presumption all his own,
 Can he do otherwise than err ? than make 49
 A stumbling block, a mountain of offence,
 Of revelation from the Deity ?
 Than fall in his own wisdom ? and be struck,
 Confounded by the Gospel's foolishness ?

O heart of man ! how humble should it be, 50
 From recollection that it is itself
 Creates its own destruction, digs the grave
 Of its own happiness, and opens wide
 The jaws, itself to crush in endless death !
 Yes, humble should it be !—and having sought 51
 To ascertain the will of the Most High,—
 Thence having formed his creed, a creed
 Of strength sufficient to support a soul
 Immortal, hanging there for life,—should he
 Fall prostrate in humility, through sense 52
 Of weakness, ignorance, and tendency

To err in thought and action,—not on those
 Passing stern condemnation, who a faith
 Diff'ring, have chosen in the exercise
 Of their free judgment,—but with conscious soul 515
 That naught of reason, nature, or of sense
 Hath he to them superior,—therefore he
 In liability to err, to them
 Is equal.

Were the Spirit of the Age
 Of this description, depth of argument, 520
 Discussion lengthened, controversy spun
 While life and vigour lasted,—would create
 Love and not hatred, patience, sympathy,
 Kindness, forbearance, courteousness, and peace,—
 Not discord, and uncharitableness. 525

Were this the Spirit of the Age!—for this
 Is real candour, such as God approves,
 Enraptures angels, and enlightens men
 Who feel its cheering, genial influence;
 Far otherwise is she, usurper base, 530
 Tyrannic monster! She, the mind of man

Would cover with the mists of ignorance,
Lest that the clouds dispersing he should use
His quickened vision, to direct his hate
And persecution with more certain aim ;— 645
Such her pretence and that clear sophistry ;
But for the hidden motive which alone
Prompts her, with mists of ignorance, the mind
Of man to cover, to encircle round ;—
It is, that undirected, without light 540
Or guide, all heedless may he wander, till
In the vast chasm of Infidelity
He sink to rise no more, for ever fallen.

'Tis not a dream, a fitful vagary
Of wanton fancy that before mine eye 545
Is crossing ; living was the form on earth,
To me well known and intimate ;—and once,
Esteemed not lightly, not a little loved.

A child of many pray'rs and tears was he ;—
For holy were his parents, and their hearts 550
Sought neither wealth nor honours for their son

Nor worldly wisdom, but the love of God,
His truth, his knowledge, and his guardian care;
Certain, that these acquir'd, all other things
Needful would be imparted.—Infancy 555
And early youth passed over while he dwelt
Near to his parents; and he wanted not
For faithful, kind instruction in the way
Of righteousness; and pliant was his mind
And seemed to understand the truth and feel 560
The pleasures of religion;—and the means
Of grace were not neglected, but received
His constant, fixed attention;—and his heart
Was filled with all of amiable and kind;—
Alas! the seed was sown by the way-side;— 565
It sank not, took not root, and died away.

Called from his home, he mingled in the world,
Tasted its pleasures, its amusements,—soon
Enjoyed them, tho' disgusted at the first;—
And soon the very form of godliness 570
He cared not to observe;—for others laughed
And jeered him as towards the house of God

He bent his way ;—and called him bigoted,
 Enthusiastical and Methodist,
 Sectarian and fanatic ;—and enquired 515
 If that he served his God with greater zeal
 And fervour than themselves ; if that he thought
 His life more upright and more honourable
 Than was their own ; if any man of sense
 Could possibly conceive that God was found 520
 In one place more propitious than another ;—
 And told him that the worship of the heart
 God had demanded,—that “ he can’t be wrong
 Whose life is in the right,”—that forms and creeds,
 Diversities of sentiment, had caused 525
 In ev’ry Age, more want of charity,
 More bloodshed and oppression, than all else
 Beside ;— that true Religion was all peace,
 Benevolence and love ;—and ended thus :
 “ Now judge with candour for yourself ; with us 530
 Be joined, or still continue as you are ;—
 Choose you the most consistent class ; the one
 Instinctive naturally with most love.”
 He chose the path of candour, falsely called

By popular opinion ;—and for years 595
I saw him not again :—we never met
Till at his death-bed-side I stood,—by him
Summoned, that I might see his awful end,
Catch his last breath, and close his vacant eye.

The sight unmanned me ;—bitterly I wept 600
And bursting seemed my bosom, and my heart
Entreated God for death, for instant death,
To shun the spectacle ;—but yet a hope
Lingered within me, that my dying friend
Was not as whispered fear, but as my wish 605
Would have him ;—but this glimm'ring spark of hope
Was soon extinguished, and by his own hand.
“ Weep not,” he said, “ you have no cause for sorrow
But rather for rejoicing with a joy
Unspeakable, and full of glory ; you 610
Forsook not God, and he forsakes not you.
I, wearied of him, listened to the voice
Of seeming Candour, who with honied tone
And flatt'ring promises of love and peace,
Allured my heart to wander from its God, 615

His Gospel to despise, his pleasant yoke
 To cast from off me, and his Son Divine
 To deem unworthy of my homage, man,
 Man only as myself.—By slow degrees
 It thus ensnared me, teaching me at first, 610
 That vain was all enquiry for the will
 Of God, in matters of less import; then,
 That since it was the worship of the heart
 Alone he needed, vain and futile were
 All public ordinances, forms and creeds,— 615
 Then, that the Book of God the fountain was
 Of persecution, enmity and hate;—
 And that it followed as a consequence,
 Nature alone could be relied upon
 For pure instruction in unerring truth;— 620
 And soon I found that nature taught not Christ,
 And through him only, man's salvation;—taught
 Nothing but God, and Him as the Creator
 And not the Saviour; yet I followed on
 Where Nature led; and she has brought me here, 625
 An unbeliever in revealed truth,
 A dying mortal, dying to be damned."

Did I not weep ?—As fountains were mine eyes,
Fountains of bitter waters,—that my voice
Amidst their rushing scarcely was distinct. 640
Yet did I point him to the Saviour, still
Waiting to show compassion, to forgive
With free forgiveness even him whose tongue
Had spoken blasphemy against his name,
Whose sins his bleeding side had pierc'd afresh, 645
Torn open ev'ry wound and poured in gall.

But it was useless ;—" Speak not unto me "
He cried, " of love and mercy : I have sinned
Beyond forgiveness,—till Almighty love
Hath changed to hate Almighty,—mercy's show'rs 650
Have turn'd to floods of vengeance, seas of hell.
Pardon and I have parted ; never more
Shall I entreat, or pardon granted be.

Candour I was to learn ; and all my thoughts
And words and actions, candid were to be. 655
And I am candid ;—on my dying bed
I sent for you, my boyhood's friend, but since

By me, forgotten, slighted, scorned,—for you
 I sent to hear my candour, and to bear
 Witness to mortals buried deep in sin,
 That hell will soon contain me, hurried there
 By,—masked in candour,—Infidelity.”
 ’Twas all he spoke on earth ; his spirit then
 Fled to the realms of immortality.
 But ah ! I saw him not among the crowd
 Who welcomed me to heaven,—nor among
 The holy bands around the throne of God,
 My exaltation witnessing ;—and fear
 I have within me, conscious certainty,
 That he in heaven never shall be seen.

640

645

650

Dark unbelief ! proud infidelity !
 How many are thy votaries on earth !
 How many are thy victims ! ’Tis the creed
 Of those who closely follow in the train
 Of giddy Fashion, to possess no creed
 At all ;—to live, to die in unbelief !
 And what is Fashion ? what are worldly fame
 And notice, that the fickle heart of man

655

Should think them worthy more attention, more
Devotion, ardour of pursuit, than heav'n 660
And all its joys?—What are they?—As the grass
They flourish in the morning, and at eve
Cut down, they wither. Bubbles are they like,
All gilded by the sun but bursting soon
And vanishing in air, and leaving no 665
Remembrance of their beauty or their size;
Phantoms of hell they are by Satan brought,
The multitude of earth's inhabitants
To cheat, to lure to their destruction.—Yet
Will man prefer their low, disgusting charms, 670
The impure joys they offer, to the bliss
Of heaven, lasting through eternity.

Eternity!—what mortal can conceive
The length of thy existence! or reduce
To human comprehension, the designs 675
Which veil themselves beneath thy folds obscure?
Eternity! O let thine awful sound,
Awful and solemnizing, ceaseless ring
On mortal ears;—them warning, that their souls

Immortal must exist, or blest beyond 700
Description, or accursed beyond compare,
Through all the rolling of Eternity.
Ask them, how they can venture thee to scorn
And scorning to defy, for aught that Earth
Can promise, or for all she does afford. 705
Nor scorn alone with proud defiance ; they
Frequent deny thy being, calling those
A foolish generation, credulous
And ignorant, who, of thy state convinc'd,
Forsake vain folly's circles, and make use 710
Of time, as meet preparative for thee,
Incomprehensible Eternity !

Incomprehensible !—Deserving all
Man's feeble powers, thee to understand
In part alone ;—that partly understood 715
He may prepare to meet thee,—thee to spend
Joyful and happy in the love of God.
Incomprehensible !—Yet if perchance
A mortal, of thy being made assured,
So far endeavour thee to comprehend 720

That wisely he may seek thy better part,—
 If that his soul be thus devoted, thus
 Acquiring skill in the most noble science,
 Will a whole hive of buzzing insects swarm
 Around him, and assail him with the stings 725
 Of mockery, reproach and calumny :—
 Too oft assail him with success, and turn
 Him from the road to happiness and God.

In ev'ry Age hath ridicule been made
 By Satan and his ministers, an arm, 730
 A weapon of no common pow'r, against
 The servants of the most High God, the hosts
 Of Heaven's King.—But 'tis the Age on earth
 Now resident, the honour hath acquir'd,—
 Or rather the disgrace, the endless shame,— 735
 Of temp'ring so this hellish instrument,
 Hellish, yet cowardly and pitiful,
 And mean, and senseless, and despicable,—
 And of exerting it with such a force
 And ingenuity,—that few can stand 740
 The keen assault or blunt the well-steeled edge.

No common courage is requir'd,—no weak
And wav'ring judgment,—no distrust or
doubt

Of God's most holy word,—the mind of man

To strengthen and invigorate sufficient,

745

To stand alone amidst deriding crowds

And call the Lord his God, and live a life

Of humble, meek obedience to His word ;—

To be among the faithless, faithful found,—

As sang great Milton,—faithful only he ;—

750

Amidst innumerable false, unmoved,

Unshaken, unseduced, unterrified,

His loyalty to keep, his love, his zeal ;—

It needs a strength, a courage and a firm,

Decided, steadfast principle, derived

755

Alone from a dependance that the word,

The promises of God, are sure, beyond

His will or mortals' power to violate ;—

A trust which shall remain unbroken, whole,

Incessantly relying, though the earth

760

And all Creation should consume away ;—

A trust, a hope, a certainty of heav'n

And bliss celestial, as the recompense
For the world's malice, ridicule and scorn.—

But faith like this, is seldom found ; and youth 76
Especially are weak,—and liable
And prone to waver,—by degrees to yield
To potent ridicule.—They cannot bear
The taunting laugh, the foul-mouthed stigma
cast

Upon them in their course, by men whose sense 77
And rationality in all beside
They estimate not lightly.—Or perchance
The rougher usage is withheld ; the laugh
Becomes the smile of pity, and the taunt
Is softened to the milder charge of fond 78
Enthusiasm and over righteous zeal :—
O ! let the youth by such beset,—his foes
Though seeming friends,—recal to memory
The oft-repeated dictates in the Book
Of God,—and the incentives to a zeal 79
All fervent and enthusiastic too.

What ! shall the ardour of sincerity
Inspiring the vain, frivolous pursuits
Of honours, wealth, and unsubstantial fame
Be justified by mortals,—when they treat 785
Sincerity and ardour in the cause
Most fitting for the soul of man, the cause
Of all importance,—its eternal state,—
As little short of madness,—nothing more
Or better, than devotion thrown away— 790
The workings of a visionary brain,
A heated fancy and a bitter heart?

Yet 'tis such madness, such devotion, such
Fond workings of a visionary brain,
Such heated fancies,—such embittered hearts, 795
That soar to heav'n ; and soaring, bear away
The spirit to full bliss and glory ; leaving
At distance vast, immeasurable, those
Whose grov'ling souls had feared to lose their hold
On earth, to tear away their hopes, their loves 800
And their dependance, from mortality,
Corruption, and foul matter,—and had scorn'd

And not confided in, the word of Him,—
 Because unseen by earthly sense,—who bade
 Them mount on wings of faith, and pierce the skies. 805

Such faith they brand as folly, weakness, far
 Beyond the boundaries of common sense.—
 It is ;—the folly of the gospel,—yet
 Ordained by God to baffle and confound
 The wisdom of the world ;—to bring to naught,— 810
 All base, despised, and weakly as it is,—
 The mightiness of men, their vaunted strength
 Of carnal reason and their common sense.

Their common sense !—Far, far indeed beyond
 Its limits, is this saving faith upraised ! 815
 It needs a sense uncommon and possess'd
 But seldom in this Age of vanity,
 Of self-complacence and of pride, to see,
 And seeing, rise upon its wings and soar
 To joyful, endless Immortality ! 820

God ! save my country ! nor deliver up

To its own erring, self-deceiving sense,
My still dear land ; beloved, in spite of all
Its glaring folly.—Not a greater curse
Nor woe more heavy could descend from God 217
Upon it, than to be forsaken, left
By Him, with common sense its only guide !

BOOK VI.

**GOD ! save my country ! and her rising youth
Inspire with greater ardour in thy cause !
Nor let them, heedless of their life, long tread
The pathway beaten by their fathers ; lead
Them in a track not oft frequented,—one, 5
With men, of small repute, and frequent thought
A rough and lonesome road ;—but 'tis the King's
High road of Holiness,—the path of peace,
The pleasant way,—the track marked out by Christ,
The only passage to eternal life. 16**

**O ! may the ploughshare of conviction cross
And furrow up their souls, which, like a field
Barren, uncultivated, or by foes**

Thick sown with seed corrupt and worthless, bear
Nothing but weeds and rubbish ; then may tears 10
Of true contrition, soften the hard soil
And fit it for reception of the seed
Sown by thy hand, Almighty,—watered oft
By copious showers of thy Spirit,—warmed
And cherished by the all-pervading beams 20
From thine own smiling countenance of love ;—
Then shall they bring forth fruits of holiness
And flow'rs of virtue, to the endless praise
And glory of thy ever blessed name.

Thus would I have it ;—but, alas ! my wish 25
Outstrips my hope, my expectation,—far
Outstrips my fear.—The parent, self-esteem'd,
Self-satisfied, and not accustomed oft
If ever, to the voice of censure,—hopes,
And naturally hopes, that as himself 30
His child may be :—and naturally strives,
And suffers not a means to be untried
The same to render him ;—perverting still
God's righteous word, “instruct and train thy child

His proper path,"—to his unrighteous use. 25
 Unrighteous;—and I fear the youthful race
 Will follow on to know unrighteousness,
 Seeking their own destruction.—Can we hope
 The grape to gather where we planted tares?—
 The olive, where the thistles?—Can an Age 30
 Corrupt, corruption loving, and the minds
 Of their descendants filling with corrupt
 Desires, unholy principles and pride,—
 The fathers be of a posterity
 Righteous and humble, virtuous and just, 45
 And charitable? and upon whose front
 Shall be engraven, "Holy to the Lord?"
 They can. They may. But will they?—On them-
 selves
 Depends the grand result, at present seen
 By God, Incomprehensible,—alone. 50

Can we expect the olive and the grape
 To gather, where were planted thistles, tares?
 But are they planted?—Doth the very breath
 Of the fond father as he overhangs

And gazes on his offspring,— doth the milk 55
 Of her, th' enraptur'd mother, which the babe
 Is placidly imbibing,—and the kiss,
 By either oft repeated, as they bless
 Their child, the pledge of sweet and early love,
 And in the transport of the moment feel 60
 The height of earthly happiness, a joy
 Which would repay them for whole years of woe,—
 The kiss,—doth it, do all communicate
 The bitterness of sin?—and do they fan
 And rear, and nourish after misery? 65
 Lord! what is man that thou should'st visit him?
 The son of man that thou should'st condescend
 Still to regard him with thy pitying love?—
 Thy way is in the sea, and in the great,
 The mighty waters is thy path,—unknown 70
 Are all thy footsteps, God unsearchable!

Are tares and thistles planted?—To a soul
 From earth and sin set free, and perfect made
 In love and holiness, it is a theme
 Of not the most delightful kind, but long 75

And wearisome and melancholy, not
Becoming us redeemed and sanctified,
Happy and peaceful.—To unravel thus
Ev'n to its primal end, the thread of vice,
To trace the origin of evil home, 6
Watch its progressive increase and define
The cause more proximate of ev'ry sin,
Is fitter for the voice of holy priest
On earth, than seraph bard in heaven. Yet
Perchance, in pointing out the more distinct, 8
The more apparent errors in the work
Of education, as it is performed
At present on our earth, we may be led
To glorify with greater fervour, Him
Who taught us by His Spirit, and inclined 10
Our hearts, their earliest efforts to direct
To His blest worship,—Glory to His name.

Are tares and thistles planted? Is the means
Ordained by the Creator to impart
To his young creatures, knowledge of His word, 16
The revelation of His holy will,—

To point them to fair virtue's path and show
Its beauty and its excellence,—abused,
Perverted from its rightful destiny,
And rendered worse than worthless? teaching them
Knowledge of all iniquity, and them
Deceiving, till it brings them to a world
Where there is no deceit, but all is clear,
Apparent, self-proclaiming misery?
Abused, perverted, worse than worthless made
Is education, by the race of men
Now habitants of earth. Nor few nor small
The errors of the system, whether they
Of theory or practice; but they all
Rise from, or may be said to terminate
In this;—the non-instruction in the path
Of true religion,—or the vague attempt
To change the spirit naturally dark,
Polluted and corrupt, by formal, cold,
Forbidding dictates, lifeless lectures, long
Uninteresting ceremonies; thus
Implanting notions in the youthful breast
Unfavourable to the early growth,

And to the exercise discouraging,
Of fervent piety ; and making seem 11.
Religion, as a dull, unmeaning thing,
Prosing and stupifying, void of charms,
Attractions, beauty, loveliness, and fit
Only for blighted spirits, of the world
Weary, and disappointed with their lot ; 12.
And not becoming youthful, ardent souls,
For pleasure thirsting eagerly, and wild
With transport at the thought of happiness ;—
Or in the oft instruction by the lip ;—
Perchance not altogether free from truth 13.
In abstract, nor inculcated without
Apparent earnestness, sincerity
Of purpose, and design,—but ah ! explained,
Elucidated by a life impure,
Unholy, inconsistent, full of sin. 14.

'Tis then the non-implanting in the heart
Of youth, correct and proper views of pure
And undefiled Religion, is the chief
Or parent error in the course pursued

Of education.—To acquire the art 144
 By which a man his livelihood must gain,
 May and should be devoted not the least
 Division of his time ; and while he thus
 Devotes it,—granted always that the art
 Or science swerve not from the purity 145
 And meekness of the gospel,—may he show
 His faith in Christ, and glorify his God,
 And serve his fellows in no common way.
 But what shall be recorded of the youth
 Who wastes his hours and days and months and
 years, 150
 In ransacking old Greek and Roman books,
 And cramming all their jargon in his brain
 To no good purpose,—nor to benefit
 Himself or fellows, nor to magnify his God ?

Knowledge is good ;—and classic learning too, 160
 And mathematics' deep profundity,
 And the sublime and snow-tipt mountain-heights
 Of sound philosophy, may be explored :
 And while exploring, may the mind expand,—

Perchance disgusted turn from,—and devote 170
Its larger, more capacious pow'rs to serve
Its Maker ;—But amusement this should be,
The recreation of the soul fatigued
By useful exercise, and needing change
As does the body ;—not its chief employment, 175
Its constant labour ; in acquiring which
Is spent the glowing ardour of the soul,
The spring-time of mortality, when all
The powers and capacities are fresh
And strong and youthful, and the nerves 180
Are firmly braced and strung in harmony,—
Unjarred, unloosened by the heavy cares,
The painful disappointments of the man !
Yet does the modern schoolboy waste his youth
And spend his youthful energies,—by arm 185
Of strong compulsion forcing him, not oft
Necessitated by his will, his choice,——
In striving to receive within his brain
These ancient heathen fables, and to solve
What solved is little useful, and to prove 190
That God is not, and that himself shall pass
Away to nothing, wholly be expunged.

Such one example ;—now behold that form
 All but angelic lovely—see it glide
 Through the intricate mazes of the dance, 175
 Unravelling the thread of time, with eyes
 Beaming delight the faster it succeeds ;—
 Now watch it at the harp,—let Folly blush
 To see herself outdone by man ; for man,
 Fondly, most fondly, but as vainly lists, 200
 Expecting lists, for sounds of melody
 To steal from whence is discord,—where no glimpse
 Of music e'er was caught ; and forces oft
 To sit for hours with ev'ry sense awry,
 His female offspring at the sacred harp ; 205
 Lingering for the promise of a sound
 Of concord sweet, but lingering in vain !
 As if, poor fool ! that 'twas a thing in course
 That all should joy in music ; where she dwells,
 She needs not violence to make her known ; 210
 And happily for man, and cause for thanks
 To God Almighty, 'tis but rarely found,—
 Comparatively speaking, 'tis but rare,—
 “ His likeness, his fit help, his other self,”

In harmony delights not; woman's breath 215
 Is softest music, and alike her soul
 And voice and ear, are tuned to melody;
 For her to make a ravishing profusion
 Of sweetest sounds, needs not a daily task
 For hours prolonged; 'tis time all thrown away 220
 For which eternity must pay the dole.—
 But I have wandered;—then behold that form
 All but angelic lovely, from the dance
 Proceeding to her harp, at which she sits
 For hours to practise;—practise harmony! 225
 Drilled daily or unable to preserve
 A flow of sounds agreeable! it seems
 A paradox, and strange and wonderful!

The time for dancing and for music lapsed,
 She takes her pencil,—then perchance, she deigns 230
 An hour at fancy needle-work, or reads,—
 'Rapt in profound attention, beating fast
 Her pulse, her colour glowing vividly,
 Her eye running in haste from line to line,—
 The last new novel;—then retires to dress;— 235

And who can count the minutes which are spent
 Before the mirror, while she decorates
 With lavish cost and glitt'ring gaudy show,
 The perishable clay? To dress?—ah! no!
 To learn, to study how she most may be 240
 Undressed while Nature blush not :—thus she spends
 Her moiety of time; the other half
 Is taken up with scandal, proud display
 Of person and accomplishments,—the joys
 Of sense, and slothful sleep!—Behold this form 245
 Thus passing each successive day, each year,—
 And ask if that it be connected with
 A soul,—a soul made rational,—a soul
 That must endure through all eternity
 In torment, if it waste its time on earth. 250

Ask not its parents or its tutors ;—they
 Would stare and wonder at the question ;—keeping
 A scornful silence, or alone replying
 By calling their interrogator mad.
 They think their child, this lovely form, possessed 255
 Of mind above her peers, superior far

In sense and reason to the vulgar crowd ;
And hope that through their training, through the
care

They thus exhibit for the rapid growth
And culture of her powers,—or to use 26.
Their own and fav'rite phrase,—that thro' this “ best
Of educations,” which they have bestowed
Upon her, she shall soon “ come out,” and shine
With dazzling brilliancy, excessive light.

Such, fashionable education ; such, 26.
The system, which mankind expects to raise,
And to rear up inheritors to heaven.
Than folly 'tis more foolish,—than neglect
More negligent,—than sin more sinful,—more
Unnatural and brutish than the hand 27.
Which slays the body ;—ruins this, the soul.

Here will I leave them,—worthy were they not,—
The parents, and the tutors, and the plan,—
Of so much notice :—and will now observe,—
With less of indignation in my song, 27.
Less blame and less denouncement, but with more

Of grief sincere and sorrow cutting, true,—
 Another party.——Britain, our dear land,
 Can boast of sons of mighty mind, of vast,
 Ennobling talents, reason grand, sublime, 188
 Majestic genius, thought capacious, still ;—
 And she can say, and most sincerely say,
 That not their talents, reason, genius, thought,
 Exceed their philanthropic love,—the fire
 Which glows within their bosom, prompting them, 188
 These wondrous pow'rs, these heights unclimb'd, these
 depths
 Unfathomable, to exert and spend
 In the promotion of their fellows' good.

O ! 'tis refreshing, cheering to the heart,
 To turn from parents who are spurring on 290
 Their progeny to everlasting woe,
 To such a glorious and delightful scene !
 To view such men,—to know that such a field
 Of cultivated mind, and such a mass
 Of close, decisive energy, are both 290
 Devoted to the welfare of mankind,—
 To civilize the savage,—to reduce

To social order and harmonious life
And peace and concord, the rude wand'ring herd,—
Their sense to brighten,—to inform their souls,—
Direct their judgment, and their rough, half-formed
Ideas to re-model,—and to light
Within their hearts the fire of boundless love !
O ! 'tis refreshing, cheering truly,—full
Of sweetest and most gratifying joy,
That such should be the motives, such the hopes,
Such the endeavours of these noble men !

But what the plan, the means, by which they hope
This purpose to effect ? and where is found
The lever, by whose instrumental aid
They think to raise the clogging, deadly weights
Of ignorance and superstition, thus
Permitting to shine inwards with a light
All beautiful, the sun of knowledge ?——Sad, most
sad,
And ever to be deeply mourned, that they
Should, for the most part, have essayed a task
So mighty, with an instrument so weak !—
Should have passed by the rightful path and turned

Into a road of fond delusion, there
 To wander, followed by the gaping crowd ;
 Nor find the gem they seek, the pearl of price, 320
 The peace, the happiness, the bliss of man.

They judge, and rightly judge, that not by force
 Can the rude, rugged nature be transformed !—
 By physic force I mean ;—and therefore use
 The strength of reason ; of their ignorance, 325
 Comparative inferiority
 In the grand estimate of human worth
 And of their folly, men convincing ; thus
 Exciting in their bosoms, ardent thirst
 For knowledge, which they ready stand prepared 330
 To slake, and hope to satisfy. With what ?
 Not with the living water from the well
 Of life eternal ; which, whose that drinks
 Shall thirst no more for ever, but shall bear
 Within him, an interminable spring 335
 Of water, ever fresh and pleasant ;—no !
 The drought of an immortal spirit, they
 Aspire to quench with streams from earthly source ;—

Haply do quench it for a time ; but soon
The thirst returns more powerful than before ; 340
And shall return, till that the fount be sought,
Proceeding from the spotless throne of God.

Disgusted with the slavish forms, the laws
Tyrannic, arbitrary and unjust,
Which fettered all establishments designed 345
For public education, and which bore
The character of national ;—unjust,
Tyrannic, arbitrary laws, I mean,
Which pointed at religion and confined
Instruction's benefit to whom approved 350
And thus professed one creed, and practised rites
And ceremonies by themselves ordained,
And followed certain forms ;—with laws like these
Disgusted, these bright luminaries turned
To a far wide extreme ; and in their haste 355
To banish from the land the stigma foul
Of bigotry, illiberality
And want of freedom, banished from their schemes
Of public education, that which ought

To fill the highest place, to occupy 340
 The most important seat,—which should receive
 By far the most attention, and to which
 The most profound attachment should be given :—
 I mean Religion.

What shall it profit man
 If that he gain the world, and with it gain 345
 All sense, all carnal knowledge, all that earth
 Can furnish, and be ruined in his soul,
 Be void of love to God? And what can bring
 Such universal peace on earth, such bliss
 And harmony ; and what can civilise 350
 The untamed savage, render tractable
 Th' unruly will, and melt and soften down
 The rugged disposition, while it gives
 At the same time security for heaven,
 As can religion? piety to God, 355
 And boundless charity to fellow man?
 O ! tis the better part, and should be made
 The grand, the primal object in the course
 Of education, to prepare the soul
 For the great change incomprehensible 360

Which must, or soon or late, arrive ; which
comes

Frequent without a warning ; and to which
Succeeds there nothing ; thenceforth, all is one.

Let me pay justice and attribute praise,—
If that a mortal ever praise deserve,— 355
Where it is due. Religion placed aside,
These wondrous, mighty men,—as would indeed
From such men be expected,—have devised,
And closely follow up, majestic schemes
For moralising through the agency 360
Of education, the whole race of man.
Such schemes can work but slowly, and as yet
They struggle in the birth ; but seem to gain
The popular attention, to acquire .
Progressively increasing confidence,— 365
And promise to possess in course of time
No little influence :—to God alone
Is known their certain fate, their destiny.
But He hath said,—He who can never lie,—
“ FIRST seek ye for my kingdom, to possess 400

My righteousness ;—then whatsoever good
Ye need, my hand shall readily bestow."

Let me pay justice ;—'tis not totally
From sight, Religion is withdrawn by those
Who thus desire the welfare of their kind. 404
They talk, and talk sincerely, that the plan
Which they pursue shall fit the human mind
For the reception of Religious truth.
'Tis fallacy ;—Religion planted there
The primal object, would prepare the mind 410
For all of good in knowledge else contained :—
Then would their growth receive their mutual aid.
But to the Bible ; in which blessed book
These men profess their credit, daring not
Its words to contradict :—then let them turn 415
Its pages over,—turn and seek to find
One passage which will justify their hope,
Their expectation ;—'tis impossible !
They cannot ! O, then let them ponder well,
And well consider of the path they tread ; 420
A path without a promise, and denounced

By the Almighty in no common terms !—
With energies, abilities like theirs,
Like theirs with influence, devoted all
To spread the gospel of a Saviour Christ, A25
To render known his never failing love.
And his exhaustless grace,—no little good
Might be effected.—What if they refuse ?—
I tremble at the thought ;—I dare not tell
The good, the harm they have the power to do. A30
Good they can do ;—O may they good perform !

Such the prevailing error of the Age,
Regarding education ;—want of full
And clear instruction in Religion's truths.
One other I will notice ; which pertains A35
Chiefly to those who high profession make
Of Christian virtue, faith and piety
And holiness of life, and constant, due
Obedience to the righteous law of God :
The former more affects the multitude A40
Who to the forms and rites of godliness
Pay strict observance, caring for aught else

but little; thinking thus their duty done.
 But those to whom I now allude, are men
 professedly distinguished from the world; 445
 separate from its votaries, called aside
 by principle and turned aside in deed,
 from practising its follies;—and 'tis due
 to them to add,—that while are seen some tares
 among the wheat, this is predominant. 446

Then would it naturally be conceived,
 that thus convinced themselves of righteousness,
 and temperance and judgment,—they would seek
 on their offspring to impress the same.
 Alas! too oft they fail; the reason, what?— 447
 not indifference to what concerns
 the best, the future interests of those they love
 nearly as the children of their loins;—
 few two parents, parents of a son
 from the moment of his birth had been 448
 to them a never ceasing cause of deep,
 sore anxiety. 'Twas seen alone by God
 tears they wept;—by God alone 'twas heard,

Their prayers and their sighs, on the behalf,
 And for the future blessedness of him 465
 To whom their agency had given birth.

Respectable inhabitants were they
 Of earth ; respectable I mean, referring
 To outward circumstances ;—plain, neat,
 Hospitable and frugal,—and possessed 470
 Of the esteem and goodwill of all ranks
 With whom they came in contact ;—and possessed,—
 And more important was it,—of the grace
 Of the Almighty :—yet were not their minds
 Endowed with sense superior, intellect, 475
 Judgment and understanding, ranking high
 Above their neighbours ; rather was the fact,
 The opposite,—but be it as it may,
 They jogged on all their days contented, blest
 With competence on earth and hope of heav'n. 480

Such were the parents ; and as they had passed
 Their lives from the more gross offences free,
 And sins of greater magnitude,—and all along

and felt an inward sense of pard'ning love,
 they trusted that their offspring would in course 440
 follow the same direction, and become
 child of God, an heir of heaven.

They not, this was idle confidence,—
 hope that certain ends would be produced
 without the use of means ; for ev'ry means, 445
 they thought, were used ;—oft, fervent pray'r to
 God

for His Divine assistance,—and their child,
 most while in the cradle-bed was taught
 to raise his infant utterance to God
 for guidance and protection.—As he grew 450
 and gathered understanding, greater care
 was taken with him ;—schools were thought impure,
 and they resolved to teach him what they could
 at home, nor let him wander from their sight ;—
 books of lighter reading, not a song 455
 but of the songs of Zion, were allowed
 to lie before him ;—never did he hear
 a wrong expression, an unmeasured word ;—

The Holy writings would his tongue repeat
Almost entire ;—and duly was he taught 505
Its tenets and its doctrines ;—and he knew
All controversies theological,
Could draw the line distinct between each sect
And party, and remember every creed ;—
The public worship of Almighty God 510
Was close attended,—never did he miss
A service ;—and his dress and form of speech
Alike were plain, modest and discreet.

His parents died ;—died happy, for they thought
Their son secure of heaven ;—but alas ! 515
Far was he from it :—yet he never sinned
To common observation ; not a lie
Or hasty word or unclean syllable
Proceeded from his mouth ; and all his acts
Bespoke a spirit anything but bad :— 520
But unchanged was the heart, and still confin'd,
Borne down by natural depravity :
He spoke, he acted, that which in his youth
Had been compelled upon him, till it grew

Into a habit by such constant use; 615
 But sprung it not from settled piety,
 From love to God, dependance on his word,
 Conviction of his own deep sinfulness,
 His utter nothingness, his helpless state ;—
 It sprung not from a soul renewed by grace 620
 Divine, whose only study and desire
 Were to be likened to its master, Christ.

What was the sequel?—Sad indeed ! Deprived
 Of what had been the only check to all
 His natural and earthly and debased 535
 Tempers and dispositions ; and the world
 Viewing more often and with closer scan,
 And by no principle divine restrained ;—
 He gradually threw away and cast
 Behind him, clothes so tight and wearisome, 640
 And then assumed the garments,—dreadful truth !—
 The garments of the hypocrite.—The course
 Of thought by which he thus was led,—the train
 Of sin, progressively increasing worse
 Till here it ended, will I leave untraced ; 645

Too horrid would it be ;—let this suffice :—
 He was ordained a minister of God,—
 And died upon the gallows ;—died a death
 Not undeserved but merited and just !

One other instance, known to me on earth. 560
 It was a widower, within whose heart
 Was early wrought conviction of his sin
 And need of a salvation owned by God ;—
 But fearful was his temper ; ever prone
 By nature, to susceptibility 565
 And dark distrust ; which to a lively sense
 Of great unworthiness and deep-stained guilt
 Connected,—right and proper in themselves
 When joined to equal faith in Christ for full
 And free forgiveness,—rendered him a prey 570
 To doubts and dark forebodings, gloomy fears
 And aching melancholy ; seen alone
 By him, was the handwriting on the wall
 Speaking against him accusations deep ;
 Not that which said, “ Though scarlet be your 575
 sins,

Like purest snow shall they become ; though red
As crimson, shall they be as finest wool."

Small was his faith, and in the consequence
Small his enjoyment and his happiness,
And deep his sadness, deep and sorrowful. 370
Nor was this lessened by the loss of her,
Whose labour and delight had ever been
To rouse him from his reverie of doubt,
And in his bosom light the torch of hope.
No common mind was hers ; nor could a love 375
Than hers less fervent, beautiful, devote,
Have borne so long and with such patience
sweet,

His chilling captiousness, his lonely moods.
No wonder that he missed her,—that he felt
The hand of God upon him, heavily 380
Laying on punishment for all his sin !
No wonder that his melancholy grew
More pensive and exclusive than before ;—
And that upon his brow there gathered fast,
Wrinkles of settled, stern, acute remorse. 385

Almost he seemed as of the olden school,—
When that their creed and practice were sincere,—
Who in the solitude and desert place,
With body famish'd and with senses deadened,
Hoped better to serve God than in the world. 59c
Mistaken, self-deceived, self-tortured men !—
But he of whom I speak, was far remote
From harsh austerity or haughty pride ;
None could behold but pity, not despise ;
But yearn with sympathy, yet feel afraid 59c
Of seeking to relieve the pain by which
He ever was enclosed as by a cloud.

But on his character perhaps I dwell
Too fully ; for I knew and felt for him
Most truly ;—knew and felt too for his son : 60c
And equal pity claimed he to his sire.

Upon him was there lavished all the love
That the cold parent on the world bestowed ;
And for him did that parent agonize,
It may be equally as for himself. 60c

Agonized not the son ; his frame of mind
 Was far unlike his father's ; lively, gay
 And sportive, and considering alone
 The present hour, he felt not, nor could feel,—
 Intimate sympathy with woe like that 610
 Which weighed upon his father's heaving breast.
 And 'twas not long ere his quick intellect
 Discovered that religion was the cause
 Of all this sorrow, this unhealthy grief ;
 A cause no sooner found than secret loathed. 615

Yes, it was loathed ; but to his father's heart
 'Twas never known ; too much he loved his sire,
 To load him with such grief additional
 As hence he knew would spring ; and for this know-
 ledge,
 And for the fearful pictures which were shown 620
 To him as portraits of Religion,—while
 In fact they wanted faith, Religion's soul,—
 He loathed her but the more ; he thought her cold,
 Dull and uninteresting, lifeless, void
 Of pleasure, and the cause of pain alone. 625

His parent died ;—no longer then he wore
A cloak to save appearances ; but owned
His sentiments, and of them made his boast !
From lower sank to lower, till he fell
Into the deepest Infidelity ; 630
From thence immoveable, tho' oft assailed
By reason, argument profound, the threats
And promises of Scripture ;—all of which
He answered by referring to his sire :
“ My parent,” said the infatuated man, 635
“ You call religious, and you think him saved ;
But such religion, such a gloomy state
Of terror and despondency and pain,
Esteem I not ; 'tis suitable alone
For weak fanatics, feeble, credulous. 640
My God, the God which Nature teaches me
Hath formed my body, Him I worship, Him
I serve, more faithfully than ye ; aught else
Of fancied revelation I despise ;
Man was not made to mourn, but to rejoice !” 645

Thus lived he, thus he died.—Said I, thus died ?

Ah no !—When languishing upon the bed
Of death, and heart and flesh forsook him, then
Too late he found his God forsook him too.
I veil the picture ;—rightly was it sang,
“Men may live fools, but fools they cannot die.”

650

One error more and I will close the theme :
An error chiefly which regards the high
And middle ranks,—the lower is exempt,
Or hath not plunged so freely in the stream ;
An error, which is to the present Age,
Peculiar,—chivalry was wiser far,—
And later times had not encouraged much
The evil, though perhaps from them its rise
Was taken.—’Tis the practice which affords
To youth such liberty, such unrestrained
Indulgence of their passions ; nor attempts
To check the ardent, headstrong exercise,
But rather claps, excites, admires the more.

655

660

The nursery escaped, the child becomes
Almost its own, its only master ; school

665

Or college, for a portion of the day,
Restrains it,—then it is at large, and goes
And acts, according to its sov'reign, free,
Unbiassed will. O 'tis a spreading sin 670
And much to be lamented, that so soon
The parent should resign or slack the rein,
The only rein which could his child withhold
From misery and ruin.—Yet will they,
The parents, to the utmost of their power 675
Urge on the mischief; the exhausted purse
Is quick replenished,—emptied, filled again;—
The rod is spared; and the digrace and shame,
Which, once endured, might spur to nobler deeds
The youthful soul, as yet not hard through sin, 680
Are banished and prevented;——and, O! worse
Than all beside, the parents by their own
Unholy practices, ungodly lives,
Lose the respect, the love and the esteem
Of those they call their children; losing these, 685
They lose their power and their influence.

How strange and wonderful! yet stranger still,

Though conscious of its loss, the parent's heart
 Wishes not to re-conquer; but exclaims,—
 When urged perhaps by some judicious friend,— 69—
 “What! break his spirit? crush his noble pride,
 And make him stupid, senseless, tame, despised?”

Oh fools!—will pride gain heaven? will it find
 Admission there? and will the lofty soul,
 The high, the noble, be received by God 69½
 With favour?—Broken must the spirit be,
 Crushed and annihilated all the pride,
 Subdued the will, the passions sanctified
 And made subservient to the praise and glory
 Of the Almighty God,—or,—man must die 700
 An everlasting, never-dying death!
 What tho' the world despise him?—but I doubt
 If that it will, if he consistent be,—
 What tho' the world despise him? Is the world
 Below, of greater value than the world 705
 Above? Is earth superior to heaven?
 O! welcome scorn and shame and foul reproach,
 And calumny and slander,—welcome death

Itself, grim tyrant as it is, and foe
 By man most dreaded,—welcome, welcome all 710
 If Christ be with them, bearing in his eye,
 Love and approval,—heaven in his hand !

Religion an uninteresting thing !
 Dull, lifeless, void of pleasure, and the cause
 Of pain and sorrow !—Libel foul and base ! 715
 Traducement vile ! proofless and lying charge !
 Is that uninteresting which concerns
 Man's welfare, whether in the world below
 Or that above ? Can that be branded dull
 And lifeless, which excites the soul to love ? 720
 Whose nature and whose spirit both are love ?
 Whose purposes are love ? whose Author, God,
 Incomprehensible, Eternal, Fount
 Original, Essential, Purest Love ?
 That, void of pleasure, and the cause of pain 725
 And sorrow, which can fill the drooping heart
 With joy and rapture ? which can cause the soul
 To hold communion with the Highest, feel
 His Spirit speaking pardon and assurance

Of life eternal, and imbibe the peace 730
 Which passeth understanding?—Is that void
 Of pleasure and the cause of pain, which makes
 Life's bitter, sweet,—its sweet, earth's highest joy,—
 Its sweetest, foretaste of a heav'nly bliss?
 Let not man longer call Religion dull 735
 And lifeless! Absent faith, it may be so;—
 But faith it is which constitutes the soul,
 The presence of Religion; 'tis its life!
 And 'tis no idle, visionary faith,
 Groundless and baseless; but most surely built 740
 Upon the word, the promises of God!
 Steadfast, immoveable as is Himself!

O that men would consider! that the youth
 Of Britain, specially, would nearer draw
 And view Religion's loveliness,—her form, 745
 All matchless grace,—her beauty, passing fair!—
 O that they would behold her!—Then methinks
 They would embrace her, and their hearts would feel
 New life,—and a new dawn would burst on earth!
 The harbinger of a Millennial day! 750

BOOK VII.

WITH youth in natural connection stand
The pleasures, the amusements of the world ;—
Stand less connected in reality
Than in appearance ; for the votaries
Of pleasure,—worldly pleasure,—are not found c
Amidst the young alone ; the elder part
Of the community would fain enjoy
At least an equal share of folly, thus
Deserving more by far than equal blame.

Innumerable are the fancied joys c
Which men pursue ; perchance in outward form, -

ot altogether void of symmetry ;
 it leprous within, diseased and rank,
 unworthy an immortal soul's desire ;
 et by immortal souls the more desired 15
 and the more eagerly pursued, the more
 unfit and worthless they become ; the more
 air breath contaminates, their touch defiles.
 eadful the truth, but not less true than dread,—
 e higher that these joys are elevate 20
 om earth, the less of gross and of impure
 hich they contain, the less of sensual joy,
 e more of intellectual and refined
 l that they soar to heaven,—so the less
 number are their followers, the more 25
 to think them worthless and despicable.
 umerable are they ; and I leave
 : recapitulation of them all ;
 serving only those, which on the Age
 duce most sensible effects ; and have 30
 : greatest tendency to form the mind,
 habits and pursuits,—to moralize
 to demoralize the human soul.

And first in order naturally seems
The business, the employment of the man ; 35
Whether it be the bar, the desk, the shop,
Or whether it be nothing, laziness
That forms his pleasure, since it forms his choice.
But 'tis not to such pleasures I allude.
These,—tho' but seldom carried on with fair 40
Industry, honour and integrity,
And though but seldom seeming to promote
Man's best, eternal interests,—still may be,
And sometimes are productive of results
Not, to the Christian, altogether sad. 45
Besides, conducted in conformity
To the whole moral law, they form a part
Of duty and necessity ; and God
Upon them His own blessing has pronounced :—
But 'tis of those enjoyments that I speak, 50
Which spring not from necessity, on which
No blessing is pronounced,—yet which by
man
Are sought with wonderful anxiety,
With keenest appetite insatiable.

mong them, the most prominent appears, 55
 nd is, perhaps, productive of the most
 depravity in man,—the theatre;
 at den of thieves,—that ultimate resource
 ' all the wanton, profligate and vile,—
 at haunt of harlots,—nursery of vice,— 60
 and focus of iniquity which draws
 ithin its circle, all impurity,
 ofaneness, gross impiety, and crime,—
 mple of Satan,—sanctuary foul
 r aught that whispers enmity to God,— 65
 ace where His hallowed name is frequent used
 inly, to purposes of sin,—His grace
 spised, His power set at nought,—Himself,
 e mark for satire, wanton jest and scorn;—
 at path to hell,—that whirlpool which engulphs 70
 thin its yawning, horrible abyss,
 e souls of men, and all their happiness !

omprehensible! that such should be
 e place frequented by immortal minds
 search of happiness, their sole desire ! 75

But do they find it ? Does it meet their grasp
Within these dread, polluted precincts?—Ask
The youth reclining on his bed of down,
Surrounded, may be, by the gaudy signs
Of overflowing wealth;—of him demand 60
Whither he sought for pleasure on the eve
Preceding,—what his fortune and success;
And he can tell you, that he left his home,
All gay and fresh and healthful ; but his feet
Strayed to the theatre, and entered in 65
The place enchanted ;—and the brilliant glare
Dazzled his vision ;—and the frantic rage,
The brooding malice, the envenomed hate,
And the stern grief depicted there, aroused
His slumb'ring passions, and he scarcely felt 70
A man, a mortal ;—then the dance obscene,
Immodest,—and the lewd, impassioned song,
His burning lust awoke, his fierce desire ;—
And thrilling with sensations never felt
Before, he hurried from the spell so strange ;— 75
But hurried whither ?—To the brimming glass,
Poisoned though sparkling,—drank, again, again,—

Till of his small remaining sense bereft,
 And prompted by a fire unquenchable
 And burning yet more strongly,—to the arms 100
 Of an abandoned outcast he retired.—
 Retired,—till morning and his sense returned ;
 Then, to his home returned he,—purseless, sick,
 With aching head and woeful heart, and tongue
 That ceaseless cursed his folly. To his bed, 105
 Dismal, conscious and ashamed, he slinks
 But sleeps not ; for the evils of the night
 Will glide before him, and he swears no more
 To seek for pleasure in the theatre.
 No, perjured fool !—Tempted by seeming friend 110
 Will he not offer to resist, but seek
 Again the gilded pleasure, and again
 Disappointed ; tho' from the pursuit
 Not yet desisting, never to desist.

Comprehensible ! that such should be 115
 A place frequented by immortal minds
 In search of happiness, their sole desire !
 Can they find it ?—Ask that wretched thing

Upon her shattered fragment of a bed,
 Not loaded with superfluous furniture 122
 Sitting ; a compound of despair, remorse
 And misery.—Unheeded by her ear,
 The low and feeble cry which from a heap
 Of rags, apparently, but covering
 Her half starved, naked infant, oft proceeds ;— 126
 Unheeded by her eye, the desolate
 Appearance of her only dwelling place,—
 Its crumbling plaster, its fast-mould'ring walls,
 Its broken glass, its all of comfortless ;—
 And by her heart unheeded are the earth 130
 And all its vast machinery ;—its scenes,
 Its actors ;—heaven is unheeded too,
 And hell, and life, time and eternity,—
 All are unheeded ; vacant is her heart,
 Bewildered, stupefied ;—her eye-ball stares 136
 At Chaos, and her features never move ;—
 Dead would she seem, but that convulsive starts
 Oft shake her shadowy, enfeebled frame,
 While the cold sweat exudes from ev'ry pore.—
 And why this anguish petrified ?—From sleep 140

Has she just risen ;——horror to her heart,
 She finds herself alone, deserted ;—he,
 The wretch, her partner of the night in guilt,
 Has left her, leaving not the scanty sum,
 The price of her engagement ; scanty, true, 146
 But by her destined for a scrap of bread
 To give her child.—Yes, fallen as she is,
 She loved her child, and for him sold herself !
 Ask her, I say, the pleasure that is found
 In theatres, and Oh ! she will repeat 150
 A tale, so sad, so piercing to the soul !—

Young, beautiful was she ; her parents' joy,
 And the sole prop of their declining age.
 And happy was she,—and perhaps had been
 For ever happy,—but in evil hour, 155
 Her lover took her to the theatre ;—
 Thence date her sorrow and her misery.

I pass the detail over ;—once beheld,
 She wished to see again ; again she saw,
 And saw not seldom, till it soon became 160

Her only pleasure. Parents, lover, friends,
All were neglected for this one delight ;
Till maddened by th' intoxicating cup,
And coveting applause and fame, such fame
And such applause as by herself were given,— 165
Upon the stage she made her exit ; thus
Breaking her parents' hearts, and to the grave
Bringing with bitter sorrow their grey hairs ;—
Thus losing one who had most truly loved
Her beauty and her seeming virtue,—thus 170
Tearing herself from ev'ry friend sincere.

But flattered by the public, and caressed
By all who saw and heard her,—she forgot
These timely warnings, and became the more
Devoted to the vain pursuit. Her hand 175
Was sought by many,—given to the one
Who loved her least,—despised her in his heart,
But by her beauty was enraptured ;—soon
He too forsook her,—left her at her fall !
For ah ! she fell ;—sank deeply,—sank to rise 180
No more ; the victim of a dread disease

Which eat away her beauty, and reduced
 The gay, the courted, to be scorn'd by all ;—
 By all forsaken :—soon by all forgot.

Her husband left her,—left her not alone,— 105
 His image there remained ; and strange to say,
 Possessed its wretched mother's fervent love ;—
 'Twas all she had to give, and her poor child
 Was all on whom that love could be bestowed.

I hasten to the sequel ;—lower still 110
 She sank in misery ;—and daily bread
 Could scarce obtain,—obtain not daily work :
 The hand of charity would sometimes drop
 A mite, but 'twas not frequent, not enough
 Life to support, her own and infant's too ! 115
 But still she lingered ; till one fearful night,—
 Her child was starving, and herself had passed
 The day nor tasted food,—half mad, she rushed
 Where first she learned to sin, the theatre ;—
 Herself there sold ;—thence to her home returned ;— 120
 And !—but we have once beheld her there !

Let now the curtain drop and close a scene
 Befitting ill the sight of saints in heaven !

Incomprehensible! that such should be
 The place frequented by immortal minds 205
 In search of happiness, their sole desire !
 That to a system which produces such
 Examples of the keenest misery,
 These minds can give their sanction and their aid.

How answer they the charge? Perchance they say, 210
 That err they shall not like the wretched souls
 Whose state I pictured;—ah ! they know not that;—
 Or that the sins of others, and their follies,
 Not unto them should be attributed,
 But to the sinners only;—fools and vain 215
 And boasters of their reason, know they not,
 That by them not encouraged soon would cease
 The self-degrading actor,—soon be closed,
 And to the worship of the blessed God
 Haply be then ordained, the theatre,— 220
 Would soon be banished and their habits changed,

The crowd of harlots,—and again be breathed
Where now they lurk, the pure, sweet breath of heav'n?

It is to them alone assignable,
This ocean of iniquity ;—its source 235
Is taken from their sensuality ;
This gratified, they care not what the cost ;
Nor rest they till it be so gratified.

All else they mention, granted, be the fact ;—
That while the theatre they visit, time 236
Is not by them expended uselessly,
Nor money wasted,—but that to their own
Peculiar profit tend they equally ;—
And granted also,—granted for the sake
Of proving man's vast folly, measureless,— 237
That lust is not excited,—not inflamed
The evil passions,—not there first beheld
Are stalking vice and unveiled shameless crime ;—
In short,—that to the crowd, the theatre,
Of harm is causeless ;—still can man enjoy 238
And call that pleasure, which, the wretched thing

That for the moment wears a mask of fun
Or happiness to please its masters, damns ?
How can he laugh at, sport with, relish that
Which to his puppets, to his hour-lived toy, 245
Will be the cause of endless misery ?
How laugh, when his least mirthful, stillest peal
Is echoed by the legions of the deep,
Deriding in the fulness of their hate,
His folly and his madness,—and his fate 250
Malignantly anticipating ; fate,
Alike most horrid, endless, and most just ?

I do not say that 'tis without the bounds
Of possibility, that theatres
Might be so modelled, and conformed to such 255
Directions, and such habits might acquire,
That to the Christian they might oft become
A rational amusement, and a spring
Refreshing to his spirit, while he treads
Life's dreary wilderness ;—but when I think 260
That such they never yet have been,—and see
Their present character, how opposite !—

And think upon their tendency, their plans,
Their nature and their customs,—then I fear
That such they never will be; but while life 245
To them remains, will they be found impure!
Then quickly come their death,—and onward speed,
Speed swiftly, may the hour of their decay;—
That man may be less tempted, less assailed
By hindrance and obstruction; more inclined 270
To worship and serve God with his whole heart.

And not much higher in the faultless scale
Of reason, by the hand of truth divine
Corrected,—not more worthy of the choice
Of souls immortal,—than the theatre 275
Is gambling; specious snare which oft entraps
The youth unwary; fatal net which casts
Its many winding folds around his heart;
Casts them around in such mysterious maze,
That inextricable he sinks and dies;— 280
Perverter and destroyer of all peace
Whenever once it enters;—profligate
Seducer of the sweetest and most pure

Emotions of the heart;—soul murderer,
 Hell's populator, and calamity
 Unto mankind more dreadful,—to be feared
 The more, than famine, pestilence, or plague !

206

O senseless idiots ! pleasure for to seek
 Along the miry path which ever leads
 To certain ruin,—nowhere leads but there ;
 Ruin of all true pleasure here below !
 Ruinous cause of endless misery !—

210

O ! I have watched the death-bed of a man,
 A gambler ; in the world's opinion, just
 And true and honourable,—but in heart,
 Defiled and avaricious,—full of lust
 For riches ; riches, whose ill-favoured love
 Is parent of all evil,—fruitful source
 Of want and vice and misery and sin !

216

And yet the common tenour of his life
 Was fair and honest ; never had he played
 A double part, and cheated never ;—yet

220

A constant run of winning had o'erflowed
 His coffers, with—the spoils of families,
 And brought them to destruction.—Him I saw 305
 Stretched on the bed of death; an honest place,
 An honest time,—and honest were his words.

“ Gold was my Deity, and it I served
 With more than common ardour; with my soul
 And body prostrate worshipped it alike; 310
 And the most hard of masters hath it been!
 Not that I ever robbed my victim, him
 Deceiving by false arts or practices
 Of fraud;—but oh! the ever-gnawing pain!
 The anguish of suspense! protracted hope! 315
 The ceaseless watching! stern anxiety!
 Blood-thirsty hate! malignant envy! all
 Endured and felt by me,—felt even now!
 Still aching in my bosom,—stirring there 320
 In restless tumult! fire unquenchable!
 While haunted is my vision by a crowd
 Of victims to my raging thirst;—the wives,
 The parents and the children, and the prey

Themselves, me summoning to judgment, me 325
All ready to accuse, to plunge to hell !
O ! had I served my God with half the zeal
That I have worshipped gold;—he would not now
Have left my soul defenceless, unprepared
To meet His Majesty, and sinking fast,— 330
Consciously sinking to the deepest hell !”

Such is the brightest side, the fairest view ;
But see another, one by me beheld
With shudd’ring horror ;——’Twas a family
Whom I had loved ; and happy were they once, 335
But now so wretched, and so overcome
With anguish, that it seemed as if despair
Itself had dropped upon the earth, to show
Mortality its terrors, and to scare
From sin its parent, self-destroying man. 340

I saw a mother lying on her bed
Of sorrow, shaken by convulsive fits,
Bereft of all perception, senseless, mad !
And near her was a nurse, a new-born babe,—

Born through its mother's struggles, ere the hour 241
 Of nature had arrived ;—born but to die,—
 Enfolding in the first, the only dress
 Destined to clothe it ;—and enough I thought
 I had beheld, and vanished from the scene,
 And to another chamber bent my way ;— 350
 And there I saw a youthful mourner, one
 Like to a morning lily, beautiful,
 But steeped in dew ; or as an Autumn star,
 Her loveliness appearing through the mists
 That whelmed her ;—mists were they of fear,— 355
 The dew was tears of sorrow ; yet at times
 She strove to comfort two sweet cherubim
 Who clung about her ; in their hearts to pour
 What she possessed not, soft, balsamic hope ;—
 But ever and anon, as there were heard 360
 The screams of anguish and of wretchedness,
 Proceeding from that other room of woe,
 Her weak attempts were silenced, and her frame,
 Timid and frail and trembling through the
 strength,
 The mightiness of grief which worked within, 365

Rose ; but to stand unable, sank again,
While the young brothers sighed and wept the more.

Had I not seen enough ? It was a grief
Too sacred to be handled, too intense
For aught but God to soften ; other touch 270
Had made a wound so sensitive but bleed
The faster ; she, the mourner, had recoiled.
And soon I left her, left her to indulge
The all of luxury she found in grief ;
While to another room I hastened.—There 275
I soon perceived the cause of all this woe ;—
There learned its origin, nor wondered then
At its immensity ; for there I saw
The father,—of this family the head,
The natural protector, fondest hope, 310
Instructor and example ;—him I saw,
A bloody corpse, all mangled, fearful, dead !
And near him laid a pistol !—then I guessed
The fatal history, the dreadful tale !
Guessed but too truly ! but too causeful feared. 315
But here I will not linger ; let this pass :—

Gambling had ever been his snare, his toy,
 His only pleasure and enjoyment; death
 Came in its train!—A various success
 His hand had met with; now 'twas good, now
 bad,

39

But frequent more the latter;—and it came
 At last so frequent, that, his wrath inflamed,
 His pride much hurt, his passions sudden roused,
 He swore to stake his fortune and his all;
 To make up ev'ry loss, and then to leave
 For ever, this bad habit,—or to lose
 Still more, to perish in a ruin vast!
 He lost and perished;—doomed himself to hell!

39

Thousands are oft assembled on the turf,
 In the fleet race their happiness consisting:—
 But here are visible two parties,—one,
 The other far-surpassing in their guilt.
 For 'tis not the spectators, the applause
 Of gazing multitudes, which here excite
 To sin, the actor;—witness, place so famed
 On earth, where few are present, haply none,—

40

41

But where still flourishes the crime!—The race
 Is but a cloak for gambling to the part
 Most guilty; but of gambling far the worst
 Species; for not contented with the sins 410
 Inseparable from a life thus spent,—
 The ruin oft, and the destruction too,—
 They add the profligate abuse, the waste
 Of blessings by God given to increase
 Their happiness when rightly used;— I mean 415
 Their cruel treatment of the noble beast,—
 More noble than themselves, more generous,
 More just; and such a beast is better far,
 More to be envied, than his owner, man!

The other party though less sinful, still 420
 Have much for which to answer;—waste of time,
 Of talent, riches;—vanity of dress;—
 Lightness of spirit which engenders oft,
 Malice and strife; or spreads abroad the oath,
 The wanton jest and slander :—add to these 425
 The nature of the pleasure, which consists
 In cruelty,—unnatural excitement
 Of passions, and promotes not in its end,

A single virtue, nor encourages
 One good emotion of the soul ;——then ask, 434
 Is this a fit employment for a man
 Not doomed to perish like the better beast
 He thus misuses ;—but in pain extreme,
 Or fullest bliss to spend eternity ?
 The choice his own ; made when he makes his choice 435
 Of pleasure and employment on the earth.

The feast and ball and their accompaniments,
 And all such slighter pleasures,—slight indeed,
 But brimming full of folly,—I omit
 To mention ; and pass over to a theme 440
 Of more importance, far more rational,
 Viewed as a source whence mortals drink in joy.

But ere upon this wide-extended field
 I enter, let me not forget to sing
 The pleasures of the Christian,—his delights 445
 And recreations ;—not I mean, the sweets
 Drawn from a sense of pardoned sin,—or those
 Arising from communion blest with God,

His worship and his gracious promises ;—
But those which,—by a principle divine 450
Forbidden in the common joys of earth
To hold participation,—he pursues
In lieu of theatres, the cards, the race :
Sweets, in themselves most holy and most pure,
But turned too frequent from the rightful course. 455

So strong the tendency original
In man to sin,—that even with a heart
By grace divine forgiven and renewed,
Oft will he turn aside to evil,—oft
Of good make evil. I have seen a crowd 460
Passing the playhouse by, and making deaf
Their ears to all temptation which assailed
Them, while before their eyes they cast a veil,
To shut out visions which, perhaps, once seen,
Would have been seen for ever ;—and I thought, 465
Here is Religion ; where these people go,
I follow,—and I followed,—and with them
I entered in the temple of the Lord ;
For thus it outward seemed :—but when I heard

The simple titter, or the coarser laugh, 430
 The whisper of foul scandal, lightsome mirth
 And busy observation ;—when I saw
 The glitt'ring dress, the conscious, haughty eye,
 The wand'ring gaze desiring man's applause ;—
 And when I learned the cause which had convened 435
 This vast assembly,—charity to man,—
 The propagation of the gospel truth,—
 The glory of Jehovah ;—then I thought,
 Better with titt'ring, laughter, scandal, mirth,
 Needless remark and glitt'ring dress, and eye 440
 Of haughtiness, and busy, wand'ring gaze
 Seeking for admiration,—better far
 With these the theatre have visited,
 Than thus have dared profane the holy place
 Of the most High, the ever living God. 445

True, when the solemn service for the day
 Had its commencement, closed was ev'ry lip
 And fixed each eye,—humbled, I trust, each heart ;—
 But was the former levity of soul,
 Meet preparation for the holy work ? 450

Showed it not worldliness but half concealed ?
Pride but subdued in part ? a smothered flame
Of towering Ambition, but unquenched ?
Showed it not something of the Pharisee ?
O that these Christians would reflect upon
Injunctions in the Scripture, not alone
Once mentioned but repeated oftentimes,
To charity unseen, unheard, unknown
By the vast multitude, but felt by all !

True charity,—by which I understand,
An aim by just exertions to promote
Man's interests, or heav'nly or of earth,—
Is a divine employment, and deserves
Man's warmest, most enthusiastic zeal.
But when I see itself insinuate
Amidst the deeds of love, a worldly thought,
A spirit which seems wishing to exceed
A friend, a brother, in its offered alms,
Or its success in argument, the cause
Defending,—spirit harsh of rivalry,—
Forgetful that the widow's mite is more

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Than heaps of gold and silver ;—when I hear
 The rancorous dispute, the warmth of strife,—
 Removed, O ! far from Christian candour, far
 From Christian spirit,—from two bands distinct
 Proceeding, though their leader is the same, 615
 The same their foe, their motives too the same ; —
 And when I listen to a multitude
 Singing a song of Zion, but alone
 Wishing to please the mortal ear, the heart 570
 Neglecting, caring not to elevate
 Its thoughts and its affections to its God ;—
 And when I see the maiden, once so fair,
 So modest and so graceful and so meek,
 Become, since that she clothed her lovely form 625
 With the unsullied garments, like herself
 All virgin purity, of Charity's
 Kind priestess,—when I see her then become
 Immodest, dictatorial and proud,
 With sense of her own merits swollen, vain 531
 Of what she hath performed, and ever seeking
 The public eye,—to see her name exposed
 In print, “ the patroness,” “ the manager,”

“The lady-president,”—O ! when mine eye
Rests on such doings,—when my astonished ear 536
Is wounded by such language, then my soul
Becomes more conscious, that the Christian world
Needs mighty reformation ;—and must soar
Still higher from the earth, and seek its joys,
Its recreations, in an atmosphere 540
Still more refined ;—and in the altar’s fire,—
The altar of the Lord,—must purify
Its charity,—ere ever it can hope
To witness earth’s millennial jubilee !
O ! let them bear in mind an Uzzah’s fate ! 544

One pleasure only shall I notice more ;
Common alike to Christians and to him
Who Christianity professes not ;—
Or though professing, makes it not his rule
For conduct,—steadfast fixes not his faith 548
On what it dictates, promises and threats.

Sad proof it is of man’s depravity
And his departure from the ways of God,

That blessings given by his Maker's hand,
And tending naturally to promote 555
His happiness, are by his will perverse,
Forcibly wrested from their proper use,
And made sharp instruments of misery.

God gave the printing-press to man in love
And meant it for a blessing ; to diffuse 560
Throughout all nations, his most holy word,
And prove an innocent and chaste delight.
How hath man used the giver and the gift ?
The giver hath insulted, by the gift
Abusing, and to purposes of sin 565
Devoting that which should alone spread peace.

But notice not, my harp, the teeming throng,
The mighty mass of senseless, filthy stuff,
Which in the shape of song, indecent jest,
Slandrous pamphlet, story-telling trash,— 570
So cheap, that even to the beggar's hand,
Thence to his heart, they make their speedy way,—
Disseminate thereby the seeds of vice,

And urge on man to make himself a brute.
 These will I not observe more closely ; none 575
 But brutish minds herein will take delight.
 Alas ; though brutish in appearance, they
 Are minds immortal, and as sensible
 Will be of misery or happiness
 Eternal, as the man more polished, more 580
 Refined and more fastidious ;—and in sight-
 Of God, rank equal in their real worth
 To those whose taste is finer and more nice.

And is the clown who on these pages lewd
 Thus gazes in his rapture, and receives 585
 From hence, pollution and defilement,—sunk
 To depth immeasurable, him beyond,
 Who from his love-taled novel, or romance
 Of fabled hero, eager quaffs a draught
 Of seeming pleasure and apparent sweets ? 590
 Seeming, apparent only ; for they prove
 Bitter in their effects, and painful too ;
 For in his inmost bosom they will light
 The fire of passion, hitherto unflamed ;

His reason will unsettle,—overcast 595
 His judgment with a cloud of error,—fill
 His breast with wrong ideas of the worth
 And dignity of man,—and warp aside
 His sober calculations, and awake
 His sleeping fancy, which aroused, will roam 600
 The wide earth over, and will prompt the man
 Somewhat to think himself of higher birth
 Than common mortals,—fashion'd in a mould
 Distinct from others,—and in consequence,
 To a fate destined, high above their reach;— 605
 Or haply fill his spirit with a gloom
 Of terror, or a sentimental mist
 Of sickly, vap'rish, morbid feeling, thus
 Unfitting him to meet the cares of life;—
 And, than all else of more importance,—oft 610
 Will they lull to peace his conscience,—to a sleep
 Still, universal, fatal, and enduring.—

Fiction ! how many are thy votaries,
 Thy lovers, thine enchanted ! and, alas !
 How many are thy slain !—Thy fancied joys 615

Have been to numbers the grand origin
Of real misery, substantial woe !
But few who to thy charms deliver up
Their souls, their pow'rs, escape unruined, free
From fell disease, the harbinger of death ! 620
Few taste thee, but intoxicated, drink
Still longer from thy gaudy, painted cup ;—
Drink, till they burn their vitals,—on the flame
Of passion, pouring oil,—and drink to death !

The Age is mad for fiction ! and rejects 625
As worthless, tasteless, and unrelishable,
The solid food of truth, the bread of life !
Made dishes only suit it,—all bedecked
With glitt'ring tinsel, and containing naught
But trifles, fancies, whims, and airy puffs ;— 630
All, empty rubbish, and incapable
To nourish the immortal mind,—its vast
Desires, keen appetites to satisfy,—
Its stature to increase,—and to expand
Its bounds, dimensions, and capacities, 635
Till that it reach the fulness of a soul

Made fit for heaven ;—till that it attain
The knowledge requisite to enter there !

The Age is mad for fiction !—Let the press
Hold up to scrutiny its yearly fry 640
And witness to my truth !—Incredible
Almost, the multitude it brings to light !
And more incredible, the eagerness
Of mortals to devour them ;—then to cry,
With hungry look and discontented air, 645
For more, still more,—for novelty again !

The Age is mad for fiction ;—thus I sing
Sincerely, and with spirit full convinced
That my assertion is the truth alone !
That 'tis a noted foible of the Age, 650
A just criterion, from whence to draw
Its character, its value. Yet, 'tis due
To mention, that the novels of the day,—
Those, I would notice, which are most esteemed
By the earth's wisest, which obtain the most 655
Of approbation, popularity,

And wide extension ; others are there worse
In great profusion, vast extravagance,
Of nonsense, folly, sin and mischief, big ;—
But those which meet with honour amongst men, 66
Favour and circulation,—bear a stamp
Of higher value, than the Ages past
Have witnessed.—Men of mighty energies,
Have frequent them devoted to improve
The novel,—and the public taste excite 66
To relish something of a higher kind ;—
Nor have they wholly failed ; for in their works,
Fiction is blended oft with truth severe,
Clear insight in the innermost recesses
Of human bosoms, and morality 67
Far purer than was ever taught before
In such productions.—But there still is room,
Immeasurable room, space most immense,
For fresh improvements !—Let the Holy name
Of God, be held in reverence devout,— 67
Let the chaste, simple and unvarnished truths
Of Christianity, be made appear
The one, great, primal subject,—let not Man

Be pictured other as he is, but drawn
 As proud and vile and sinful as his heart 640
 To God appears,—and let the object be,
 To humble man,—his spirit to excite
 Alone, all Christian virtues to attain
 And Christian meekness ;—novels then shall be
 Worthy attention from immortal souls ;— 645
 Shall be,—struck dead, and in the grave entombed !

I censure not all fiction ;—fancy still
 Might mount on rapid wing and pierce the sky,
 Or to the grave descend, and bring from thence
 Its horrors ;—but a fancy it should be, 650
 Corrected, purified by grace divine ;
 By God instructed, guided,—and by fire
 Alone from heaven's own altar be inspir'd !—

I censure not all fiction ;—'twas the song
 Of earthly bard, perused in bitter hours 655
 Of sorrow, when I sought the pensive charms
 Of sweet, melodious, sympathizing, soft,
 Enchanting poesy, to soothe my heart

And pacify my spirit,—'twas this song
Of love divine, yet with a pleasing tale 710
Of fiction interwoven, that mine eye
Directed to the grand Physician,—Him
Who only in the wounded breast can pour
The healing balm of hope, contentment, peace ;—
Him, who alone can strengthen and refresh 715
And firm invigorate the fainting soul !

I censure not all fiction ;—in the book,
The record of Jehovah, are engraven
Not few mementos, of immortal souls
Of sin convicted and repentance taught, 716
By spirit-mingling poesy divine,
Dressed in the many-coloured fiction's garb,—
Imagination's airy, wandering flights
Containing, and rich stores of eloquence.—
But this did Novels never ;—not a soul, 717
From them perusing can salvation trace :
While thousands, to their poison owe their death !

I hinted that the modern Novel breathed
A purer spirit, than the Ages past

Have witnessed :—and acknowledged is the fact, 720
 That the improvement springs, in part at least,
 From the Reviews,—a fast-increasing race
 Of publications, and possessing many faults;—
 But still are visible their merits too.

• Their errors first;—a jealous rivalry 725
 Of disposition, oft begetting strife
 And animosity betwixt themselves,
 Tho' the same object should inspire them all :—
 A want of unanimity in plan,
 Design and action :—prostitution oft 730
 Of their full columns to a party,—thus
 Indulging acrimony 'gainst the man
 Whose politics may differ from their own,—
 Blinding their eye-sight to his merits,—raising
 Against him, scurrilous abuse and scorn, 735
 And paltry ridicule despicable ;
 While on their partizan they pour a flood
 Of false, unearned applause, and recommend
 Him to their generation,—tho' in heart
 They cannot but perceive his errors, know 740

His falsity, and be but too aware
Of the great mischief which may take its rise
From his vain theories, his nonsense gross :—
Lastly,—but generating far the most
Delusion,—of the greatest consequence,— 745
They err in their intention ;—for they make
Their object, not the real good of man,—
Their standard of perfection and their rule
Of measurement,—not tendency the heart
To humble, Christian virtue to promote. 750
I sing of some, a part ; a few there are
Whose aim is higher and more worthy far ;
While there are others, vilest of the vile,
Who have no purpose, or to sin alone,—
Whose pages are let out to hire,—will swear 755
On his behalf who pays them best,—can claim
No merit, even not sincerity
In their intention,—and whose gain is death.

Such are not all ; and happily not such
Are those which meet with most attention,—those 760
Which have most influence, and exercise

The government, the empire of the press.
 The latter, I have shown, have errors too ;
 But they have merits ;—filthiness of speech
 And coarse vulgarity, they reprobate 765
 Not slightly :—senseless incidents, remarks
 Unnecessary, and weak arguments,
 And shallow sophistry, and glaring vice
 They spare not ;—and they stimulate to works
 Of fact and reason, genius, enterprise, 770
 And promising utility to man,
 The public writer ;—farther some will go ;
 And that which bears not on its front,—the sign
 Clear and conspicuous, of its sole intent
 As being to promote God's glory, man's 775
 Eternal benefits, or in direct,
 Straight forward path, or more circuitous,—
 Will they condemn ; applauding those alone,
 Whose views stand open and professed, and whose
 Design and execution both agree 780
 In perfect harmony,—chaste, beautiful,
 Expressive, soft and philanthropical,—
 Breathing throughout a spirit of free love.

From such reviews my soul anticipates
To man no little benefit. Their growth 795
In purity, and charity and skill,
And the advancement of their magic sway,
Their undefinable but vast controul
Over the minds of the great populace,
Are visible alike.—Nor shall they stand; 797
But grow in wisdom and in power too,
Exterminating evil,—raising good !

Like character to that of the reviews,
I pass upon the periodicals
Known by the name of journals, magazines, 795
The weekly newspapers or daily press.
The small and weak and wicked,—numerous
Indeed their quantity, and passing vile
Their nature, though in consequence but small,
But weak their power,—circulate their seeds 800
Over a wide-extended ground. They form
In number, the majority; their jests,
Their slang, their nonsense, ridicule and lies,
Excite the passing laugh, and are received

To drive away an hour of vacancy ;—
 Most horrible ! indeed, that man should seek
 For recreation in a pool of vice ;
 But not at present does my song regard
 The wisdom of mankind the multitude,—
 But of the journal ;—and although it may
 By lowest trash excite the mirth of brutes,
 It is my firm belief, that such a page
 Produces not impressions which outlast
 The humour of the moment, on a mind
 Reflecting, polished, cultivated. Wrong,
 Admitted is it, that this mind should deign
 Ev'n for a second, to peruse for sake
 Of pleasure, such a heap of folly ;—still,
 Doth it retain it not ; it reads and laughs
 And then forgets ; and never would it think
 To seek instruction, reason and sound sense
 In such a paper :—and it is from minds
 Like this, above their fellows, that I hope
 To see arise a wiser, better Age.
 From them must flow the current which shall bear
 Away in its rapidity of course,

Such journals from the earth ;—and from the soul
Of mortals shall expunge the shameful stain
Which dyes them,—that they seek their joy, and oft
Catch the infection, from this carnal herd. 320

Are all thus carnal ? and from whence seek they,
These nobler minds, instruction ?—Whence derive
The knowledge which propels them in the search
Of freedom,—which excites them in their task,
The low condition of their fellow men 325
To raise, ameliorate ?—which softens them
With pity for the wretched,—charity
For the poor destitute, the houseless man ?
Which brings before them the whole universe ?
Shows them its state, its sins, its wants ; then prompts
Them to endeavour to diffuse soft peace
And cordiality throughout the globe ?
Which rectifies the laws of commerce, bares
Its errors and abuses, animates
The spirit in extending far and wide 330
The sweets of liberty ? and from his throne
Of haughty terrors, drags the tyrant down ?

Whence obtain they this knowledge ? With a joy
 That hopes to see still greater, grander things
 Proceeding from the press,—I make reply, 90
 Chiefly from public journals ; from the few
 Who rise above the buzzing insect swarm,
 And spur to true nobility, the mind.
 Not that I call them faultless ;—jealousy,
 Contention, ridicule, a spirit oft 95
 Asserting loud the dignity of man
 And his own independence,—jeering scorn
 Too frequent at Religion, at the men
 Who dare be singular and humble be,
 Amidst an Age of pride,—and pride itself 100
 Urging to war and bloodshed, than confess
 An error,—in their columns oft are seen :—
 But they are still,—and in especial, one,
 Standing at distance high above the rest,—
 It I take therefore, to acknowledge worth 105
 Where that it may be found,—then it is still
 The propagator of no little good.—

Incalculable is its pow'r among

Mankind ; not felt in Britain only, where
Its being has its origin ;—but known
And felt on Europe's continent ;—a pow'r, 870
Which if but seldom to the good of man
Directed, could with its gigantic strength,
And blest by Heaven, crush a rock of sin !
But 'tis a journal which exerts its arm
Thus mighty, not with intermission oft, 875
But in a constant exercise ; or building up
The frame of universal liberty
Both civil and religious, or destroying
The strong holds of iniquity and crime !
It hath not reached perfection ; but a hope 880
That as “ the times ” roll on and seasons flow
In still and long succession, that it will,—
Dwells in my spirit ;—when no more its voice,—
Ev'n now but seldom heard in ridicule
Against the saints of God,—shall whisper soft, 885
Contemptuous reviling at the men
Whose creed is other than its own ; but when
Alone it shall be heard, condemning vice,
And virtue's charms approving ;—when its arm

Shall crush the theatre, not seldom now 870
 Smarting and writhing underneath its stroke
 Of just correction; when shall terminate
 The breath of slander, now not tainting oft
 Its columns;—when shall meet low reverence
 And deep prostration, the great name of God, 875
 Not often vainly used; when shall take flight
 Its few remaining prejudices;—when
 Its reason shall acquire still purer light,
 And all its efforts shall incline to spread
 True Christian liberty; and justice aid 900
 In love to govern.

Is it a false dream,
 A cheating vision that before me flits?
 But falsehood and deceit can breathe not here.

God gave the printing press to man in love!
 Behold the Bible!—Brighter now appears 905
 The picture of humanity; a light
 Soft and celestial, sheds its glowing rays
 Upon its colours,—and it wears a charm
 Not evanescent, but which fascinates

Still more the soul, the longer is its gaze. 910
Behold the Bible!—God ! all wonderful !
How measureless thy love to guilty man !
Accept thy creature's gratitude !—Me join,
Theresa, in a silent hymn of praise !

And worshipping, the seraph-spirits bowed. 915

BOOK VIII.

THUS far hath God preserved me ;—hitherto
Hath he assisted my adventurous song.
Breathe on, blest Spirit ;—guide thou still my
hand,
Jehovah ! and Thou, ever risen Son,
Co-equal to thy Father, Lord of All,
Ineffable and Infinite !—my heart
Inspire with thine own perfect love for man !

Great, Triune Majesty !—God unconceived
And unconceivable ! to all Unknown !

Thou holdest in thy hand the reins of thought !
Direct thou then my spirit !—Mighty Lord,
I am thy creature ;—all I have is thine,
All that I am,—all I shall ever be !—
Then guide and lead and manage thou my heart,
Fill me with heav'n, with Thee ;—and let my
 song
In ev'ry accent bear thy token ; while
My harp resounds with melody divine.

While the deep sinfulness of man I sang,—
My motive, Man's salvation,—Thou didst deign
Support me, while my bosom felt a glow,
A fire as from thine altar wafted there !
Great were my imperfections ! manifold
My errors, my omissions ;—small my strength
And vast my weakness ;—feeble was my frame ;—
But Thou wert present,—Thou, Almighty King !
And Thou sustainedst me !—Me still sustain,
While that I strike a note more joyful ; one,
Man to encourage,—bid him not despair !

But hark, my soul, to yonder sound!—The
course

Of time fast hastens on ;— Eternity
Is rising;—and though stern despair
Should not man's bosom chill, he must not court
Delay, for it is Death.—While that I write,
I hear a solemn toll ; again it sounds,
Again ;—now all is silent ;—and the grave
Hath closed for ever on another year !
'Tis gone ;— 'tis vanished ;—never to return !
But tho' its name is numbered with the dead,
Its warning voice still seems to cry in tones
Of awful thunder, to the sinner's ear ;—
“ Rebel, be wise ! 'tis madness to defer
Thy search for wisdom to a future day !
That day may never come ; or should thy
heart,—

Impell'd by sorrow, or the dread of death,—
Ask wisdom for her aid,—thou canst not brand
Her name with foul injustice, should her ear
Unto thy cry attend not. When she called
And lifted up her voice, thy harden'd heart

Forbade thine ear to listen, and thine eye
To view her beauty ;—when she mildly sought
To lure thee to the path of truth and peace,
Thou wouldst not ; but rejected each advance
With heartless scorn.—But now thine hour is
come,

The hour of retribution ;—and thy fear,
Thy deadly fear shall meet her mockery,—
While hateful laughter and derision's dart
Shall probe thy bosom, and inflict a wound
Of greater anguish, torture more intense,
Than all thy punishment, thy soul's remorse !

Rebel, repent !—Salvation's joyful sound,
Its glorious tidings of a Saviour's love,
Are still reported ; and the waiting door
Of pard'ning mercy still remains unclos'd.
But 'twill not long be thus ;—these warbling sounds
Shall die away and melt in listless air ;
And then, thy bitter cries, thy mad despair,
Thy helpless sorrow shall avail thee not :
And loudly may'st thou knock, still louder call,—

All vain and useless !—mercy shall have closed
Her door, long open ;—thou shalt be shut out !

Rebel, delay not !—Time's still, silent course
Glides swiftly on ;—and soon th' archangel's trump
Shall loud proclaim, in tones to wake the dead,—
While all Creation's vast expanse shall yield
Responsive echoes,—“ Time shall be no more !”

'Tis gone ;—'tis vanished ;—never to return !—
But though its name is numbered with the dead,
Its parting accents of approving love
Still float around, and whisper happiness
And peace eternal, joys without an end,
To those who wisely thought its precious gift,
A loan, to be improv'd, not trampled on,
And made Jehovah, Lord of Hosts, their trust :
“ Christian, thy course is nearly run,—thy fight
Will soon be ended,—and the cause of faith,
Soon be explained by bright reality !
And good hath been thy fight, though earth and hell
Opposed thee,—and the victory is thine ;—

And swiftest were thy footsteps in the race,
Though he, the mighty Prince of fleeting air
Was adversary, and the prize is thine ;—
And firm, immoveable hath been thy faith,
Though fearful were the dangers that assailed
Life's checquered path, and wily were the foes
Who sought thy ruin ;—and the crown of bliss,
Of joyful immortality,—reserved
For those whose faith is steadfast to the end,
Thy God, thy Father's hand retains for thee.

Christian ! endure a few more toils, receive
A few more proofs of frail mortality ;—
And there may not depart another year,
And leave thee in this world of sin and woe.
But when it dies to earth, and mounts above
To render to Jehovah its account,
And bear its witness of the thoughts and words,
And varied actions of your mortal race,—
There,—standing by thy heav'nly Father's throne,
That year may see thee,—bless'd for endless
time !”

'Tis gone ;—'tis vanished ;—never to return !—
But though its name is numbered with the dead,
Its dying voice still echoes in a tone
Solemn, sepulchral as the yawning grave ;—
“ Mortal, be warned !—forgetting all behind,
Press onward to the prize which lies before !
Time is but short !—eternity is long !—
Hell is a dreadful—heaven a happy state !—
In one or other must thy doom be fixed,
The choice thine own ;—be wise, nor hesitate !”

From their pure worship rose the blissful saints,
Smiling in holy satisfaction ;—such
Delight and joy and peace, had them refreshed,
Communing with their God :—whose presence near,
Blest rapture had imparted, with the soft
Beatifying glow of perfect love.

Again the harp was raised ;—the seraph struck
Its wires for ever tuned in harmony,
And while a note more gladsome made resound
Heaven's vaulted arches, thus he joined his song :

Behold the Bible !—While it is an Age
When pride stalks openly nor hides its face,
But in each state, profession, trade or rank
Enters, and enters welcom'd ;—while the Church
Loves too the evil, and corruption holds
So firmly to her bosom, that almost
'Twould seem, to separate the one requires
The death-blow of the other ;—while the rod
Of tyranny still awes the nations, still
Covers with slaves the mighty universe ;—
While liberty, much talked of, is beheld
But seldom ;—while a flood of theories
All wild and speculative, ruinous
And soul-destroying, overwhelm the earth
With Infidelity's rank, poison'd streams ;—
While that the education of the young
Teems so with folly, that ev'n devils blush ;—
While knowledge that is scattered forth, too oft
Unwatered by the Spirit and by God
Unprospered, for His word it teaches not,—
Designs not the best interests of man,
His everlasting happiness ;—I mean,

That by the public given ; some there is
Of a more rightful purpose and intent ;—
And while the pleasures of the human race
Are so polluting, so corrupt, defiled,
Abominable, filthy and degrading,
That he who wishes to serve God aright
And with a perfect service, must renounce,
Forsake, abandon and destroy them all ;—
While ev'n the press, that mighty instrument
Of good intended, has too oft become
A scourge to piety, a deadly bane
To human happiness ;—and while not they
The gospel of the living God professing,
Hold truth in righteousness and with a faith
Of firm assurance, but all mixed with doubt
And wavering and fear ;—while thus the Age
Is beyond refutation and denial,
An Age of folly and impiety,
Daring profaneness, hell-deserving sin ;—
While that these fearful clouds fast gather round,
Big with portentous doom, impending fate,
I yet perceive a glimmering of hope,

A dawn of promise, a bright rising sun !
It is an Age of Bibles !—Speed thy truth,
Righteous Jehovah ! through created worlds ;—
Let mortals read and tremble and repent !

O ! 'tis beyond all past, an Age for hope !
Never were thus the Scriptures spread abroad,
The truth thus published, since that truth arose,
Or written were the Scriptures.—East and
west,

And from the northern to the southern pole
Is the truth wafted ;—Truth, Almighty Truth !
Unconquered and unconquerable Truth !
And spite of all obstruction, every foe,
Or world, or flesh, or devils, it shall spread,
Shall force its passage into every heart !—
And it is spreading ! overcoming fast,
In Europe specially, its enemies
All wily though they be.—The monstrous whore
Of Babylon, with the red, crimson blood
Of God's anointed, drunk, is tottering,—
Hath tottered, and in part hath fallen too !—

All vanished is her power, her mightiness,
Her boasting !—and derided are her threats !
Unfeared her persecutions ! while her creed
Meets daily laughter from her former friends !
And all who pass behold her nakedness !
And superstition is decaying too !
Mouldered are its foundations, tumbling fast
Its ornaments, while its uncovered roofs
Let in the Sun of Knowledge, whose warm rays
Crack its untempered mortar, and it falls
Crumbling into decay,—while all its sides,
Its vaunted walls, are shaken by the wind,
The breath of free inquiry !—Soon shall come
Its ruin ; and this mighty edifice
Shall perish in a lasting overthrow !—

Mean Bigotry and narrow Prejudice,
The dismal clouds that for so long a time
Have overhung the earth, concealing thus
The light of liberty, are breaking too,
And scattering far beyond the bounds of sight.
Breaking, to be dispelled ;—or in a grand

United focus, in chaotic realms
Again to meet ;—and thence to sink to hell !

Even that spirit which at present wears
The mask of lovely candour, but in truth
Is infidelity in this disguise,—
Hope whispers, shall be made to bring forth
good !

Freedom acquir'd, and an unhindered course
Allowed to knowledge,—truth shall then obtain
Admittance to the soul and govern there !
But indirect this path ; circuitous
And winding ; and before the multitude
Could safe arrive, not few would meet their
death

In the lone wilderness, the desert place.
Better the straight direction ; 'tis as short
As simple, though it be not decked with charms
Of fancy, visions theoretical ;—
But it has light,—and light is certainty ;—
And 'tis a light increasing ever more,
Till that it shineth to the perfect day.—

Still when to this false candour I connect
The spread of gospel knowledge, the increase
And progress of inquiry,—will I hope
The better, while I yet condemn the worse !
Hope,—that Almighty God will overrule
To His own glory, this too frequent snare.

O ! 'tis an Age for Hope !—The public mind
Seems sickening of folly,—ill at ease
With its long relished pleasures;—theatres
Fail, support needing ; and the filthiness
And the iniquity which from them spring,
The wiser of humanity denounce
And seek to lessen ;—while the gambling-house
By all is reprobated ; none defend
Its mischiefs, but their fellows warn to shun
Its vortex and its misery,—and cast
An eye of ill-will where its signs appear.

'Tis true the race and pugilistic match,—
Sport of barbarians both, not rationals !
Are hotly followed in a fierce pursuit !

And drunkenness and gluttony impure,
And vilest whoredom, loosely walk the streets
Unchecked,—almost unpunished and unblamed !
Still will I hope their downfall is at hand !
Ere long that they shall vanish from the earth,
Or in its caverns hide them ;—for the stream
Of knowledge onward glides, to purify
And purge and wash away these guilty stains,
And lead immortal spirits where to find
True pleasure, pure enjoyment, fadeless bliss,
Delights without decay, without an end !
Yes, knowledge onward glides ;—The printing press
Is studious to retrieve its errors past,
And in its offspring to inject a vein
With usefulness, morality, and truth.
Even the novel stillborn comes to light,
If it contain not more substantial food
Than the mere love-tale !—History and truth,
Or argument and reason must be found
In all its pages, or it fails to gain
The popular applause, the envied fame !
And while a progeny innumerable

Of cheapened nonsense, easy make their way
Into each corner and obscure retreat,
A mighty counteraction circulates
In company ;—and not The Book alone,
Free of demand and priceless, yet of worth
Incalculable, never to be told,—
But a vast host of virtues, small in size
But giant-like in power and in strength,
Their slight and fairy forms insinuate
In deep recesses, where a work more large
Would never enter.—Journals are there too
And magazines, whose object and design
Are to preserve a record of the Church
Of God, its deeds, its triumphs,—and to spread
The ever-living gospel of His Son :—
All, free of purchase, or whose cost is such
That gives them entrance to each rank, degree
And station.—Neither shall my song omit
To notice,—though subordinate their views,
And much inferior to the grand intent
Of spreading Christianity,—the tracts
Of science and of art.—The truths they teach

Are not incompetent to be received
With the pure gospel;—and with that combined,
Taught simultaneously, will they expand
The understanding and improve the heart.

O ! 'tis an Age for Hope ! While that my soul
Refuses to approve and love a course
Of education, in whose plan, the chief
Object is not to teach the youthful mind
The beauties of Religion, and its vast,
Incomprehensible importance,—thus
Rejecting most of modern systems,—still
I can behold with approbation warm,
Yonder fair object ;—lowly in her mien
And coarse her guise, but lovely in her form ;—
The Sabbath School,—a nursery for heaven,—
The opening scene of Paradise on earth !—

Nor few nor small nor void of consequence,
These holy institutions ;—and they spread
Still wider, and their influence becomes

Daily, more strong, more felt ;—and their effects,—
The benefits which they produce, are seen
More and more visibly, applauded more
By mortals, and by them the more desired !
Is this no blessing ?—is it not a sign,
A token of improvement ?—and a spur
To hope and animation ?—'Tis the hand,
The working finger of Omnipotence !

And can I take a short but searching gaze
Into the wonderful machinery,
Directing through the mighty universe
The deeds of Charity, the thoughts of love ?—
Can I behold associations vast,—
Not in dear Britain only,—stretching out
Their arms in friendly union, to embrace,
And to excite each other to promote
Man's peace on earth, his happiness in heaven,—
And feel no hope, but linger in despair ?
Then cold must be my spirit !

What ! though faults,
And faults not unimportant,—vivid specks

That mar their beauty,—on them may be seen !
Shall I for this despair ?—When from the sand
Of burning desert takes his lofty flight
The eagle, on his wings remains the dust
Of earth's defilement :—soar at once to heaven
And gaze unblasted at the scorching sun,
He cannot :—nor can Charity ascend
From man, to elevated purity,
At its first rising. But from off its wings
Soon shall it shake pollution, and increase
In its proximity to holiness.

Yes! 'tis an Age for hope!—Corrupt, diseased
And faithless as are found the Ministers
Of God,—self called,—as in a body viewed,—
Sick are not all the members.—Faithful, just,
Devout and honest, with sincerity
By man unquestioned,—known, approved by God,
Are there some still remaining ;—chosen seed
And budding rods are they ;—a holy band
Preserving safe the oracles of God,
And doing well His purpose. Lessens not

Their number, but it is increasing fast ;
And is expanding, their utility !
And shall increase, shall spread,—till all the earth
Abounds with the pure knowledge of our God !

Have I no cause to hope ?—It is an Age,
When to and fro run many ; in their hand
Bearing the bread of life,—and in their heart,
The waters of salvation ;—from their lips
Distilling mild persuasive arguments
To soften and to renovate the soul !
O ! 'tis a grateful picture,—rapturous
To spirits high exalted,—to behold
The Apostolic Shepherd, from his home,
His friends, his country parting, but with heart
All fervent faith, on fire with love divine,—
Seeking the wandered sheep, the long-lost flock !—
To watch him through his journey, suffering
All toils, all tribulations ; standing firm
Against obstructing armies ;—seeking out
The brute-like Heathen, the idolatrous
Defier of Jehovah,—and his heart

Instructing in the gospel of our God !
The path to an Eternity of bliss !—

Harp !—with swift melody resound thy wires,
Loud yet concordant,—while I briefly sing
The tendency so visible in earth
To better its condition ;—while I note
In quick review, those of its many states
Which give the most abundant cause t'expect
An early harvest ;—and which in my soul
Excite a hope for their own speedy peace !—

On Britain and green Erin I have dwelt
Most chiefly in my song.—A character
They bear, most interesting to the eye
Of careful observation ;—which, amidst
Abounding wickedness and fertile crime,
Can yet detect a something that redeems
Them from the gloomy caverns of despair.
I envy not the spirit that alone
In the dark vista of futurity,
Known to God only, can discern dark shapes

And fearful spectres, apparitions dull ;
Can hear alone the bitter wailing cry,
The startling screech and the dread voice of doom ;—
Mine eye I feast on many a scene of joy ;
Behind the darkest cloud is visible
To me, the splendour of a noon-day sun ;—
Forms I perceive, and shadows ;—but the forms
Are angel-spirits stretching out their arms,—
Auspicious signal !—and the shadows dark,
To me appear the ghosts of sin and woe,
From earth their bodies banished ;—and I hear
A choir of heav'nly music, soft as sweet,
And sweet as cheering ;—and a burst of joy
From bands of souls immortal, in their bliss !

But wander back, my harp, again to earth,
And tell one other cause, which, manifest
In Britain, helps to light within my soul
The torch of hope,——to drive away despair !
There seems a watchfulness, a looking for,
An expectation, an anxiety
For some great change approaching. Ev'ry rank

And party, of a crisis seen aware :—
Some, eager for its coming. They will stir
Their every energy, and exercise
Their influence, to aid th' expected birth,
To urge on its arrival,—to prepare
Their fellow creatures for this great event ;
While on the rest appears a look of doubt,
Of terror and alarm ;—each whispers each
Of former warnings known to Ages past,
Of old, portentous signals ;—but abroad
They speak not of it ; stillness then and gloom
Distinguish them ;—like nature, gloomy, still,
Prior to an eruption, to a crash,
A fierce contention of her elements !

And in America there too appear
Like symptoms, like prognostics of a fate
At no great distance.—But America
Than her less ardent parent, shows more life,
More stir, more motion, more of gladsome joy !
And in her history of late are seen
Blessings more copious,—more of charity

And love divine,—and more of the effusion
Of the most Holy Spirit of our God !—
She has attained a giant's strength, ere Time
Her energies hath dried ;—and wisdom's crown,
Before her locks are sprinkled through with gray,
Or wasted are her powers !—Shall she lead
The triumph in Creation's jubilee ?—
Known unto God are all things, and his will
Shall prosper ! ever shall his counsel stand !

Such is the North of the West Continent.
The South, though far behind in intellect,
Illumination and Religion's truths,
Presents a stirring prospect to the eye.
Breaking or burst already are the chains
That held her helpless body in the dust !
And quick-dispersing are the gloomy clouds
That choaked her spirit with their murky streams !
A land of blood is she, and carnage ;—men
With prejudice beheld her, and they feared
With her to hold connection ;—till obliged
By stern necessity, nor law nor fear

Acquainted with, they ventured to behold
Her nearer ; and at last perceive, the more
They know and trust her and the less
Distrust they cherish, fairer she becomes.
And fairer still shall be her loveliness,
When that more intimate, they introduce
Religion, and destroy her Papacy !

Papacy !—marvels does the sound call up!—
Where dwells it ?—Where is the delusion found
As once it made appearance ?—Is it seen
At all, in former nature, power, pomp ?
No ! it is vanished ! or 'tis greatly changed !—
Its might, its terrors and its bigotry
Are seen and then derided,—seldom felt ;—
Or only known as a far gone-by tale !—
Some of its relics may in Italy
And Spain be still perceived,—a century
Behind the chief of Europe,—but so small
Is now their number, that they lie concealed
From common vision, from the vulgar eye !

But what I most admire,—what most excites
My pleasure and my hope in Europe's scene,
Is the increasing unanimity,
The brotherly affection of its states!—
Less is there of Ambition,—less desire
On others' rights and freedom to encroach!—
More love of peace, more relish of its sweets,
More fervour, hand in hand to be combined,
Freedom in spreading to less happy lands;
And where is Freedom, there will Truth reside.

I speak not of all Europe; but the part
Illuminated most by grace divine,
Where mostly shines the gospel.—But the Russ,
Enchanted by the softness that appears
To shine in purer Christianity,
Is throwing off his roughness;—while the Turk,
So sullen once and moody, now remits
By slow degrees, his stern barbarity!

Thence pass we into Asia;—but more dark
Becomes the picture;—yet 'tis noon-day light

When to its former darkness 'tis compared !—
Persia is pierced ;—the gospel of our God
Hath there been published,—and His holy word
Is to its tongue translated.—India's mists
Of superstition, cruelty and lies,
From earth begin to move ;—and China's self,
The haughty, the exclusive,—China, proud,
Despotic, arbitrary,—from her state
Is bending, and her iron hand unclasps.

Nor stationary, Africa ;—her sons
Of bronze and swarth, are proving fast their rights,
Their claims to human reason ;—slavery,—
Smiling malignant ev'n in her retreat,—
Defeated, is retiring,—quitting hold
Upon their bodies ;—their immortal souls
Were ever free ; and proved their liberty
By grasping Christianity ; a thing
Their marble-hearted tyrants never knew.

The South-Sea islands close my rapid view.
And here, the power of Almighty God

Hath been magnificently evident.

He spake it,—and the valley was upraised
And high exalted ;—and the mountain-hill
Was crushed and lowly humbled ;—crooked paths
Were rendered straight ;—and the rough, stony
place

Became a paved pathway ;—splendidly
Burst out the brightness of His glory ;—seen,
Acknowledged and confessed was His display
Of mighty wonders ;—seen by the wide earth ;—
And the wide earth beholding, loud rejoiced.

Then is it not an Age for hope ?—Hope thou,
My soul, in God ;—and to His Sovereign will
Submit the issue.—Spirit of my God,—
Thou who at Pentecost didst warm the hearts,
The tongues inspire of thy disciples,—warm
The hearts, and fire the tongues, and give success
To the endeavours, of thy faithful seed
On earth ; nor their remaining hope defer,
Till sick become their spirits. Shine O God,
Upon them ;—show thyself their watchful friend,

Their errless guide, firm stay and sure support;
Their justifier and their gracious God.
Give pinions to thy truth,—and bid it fly
With a resistless energy, propelled
For ever onward by thine own soft breath,
Into each bosom, into every heart.

Great Author and Proprietor of thought !
Master of clear perception !—on the earth
Diffuse still more this heav'nly principle !
Give to mankind clear judgment, to discern
Reality from falsehood,—shadows vague,
Deceitful semblances,—from honest truths,
Substance material ;—to understand
Thy will, thy holy pleasure ;—to perceive
Thy track in the deep waters ;—and to trust
To thee, Almighty,—shouldst thou bid them
walk

In the dark barren desert, where to doubt
Is death ;—or on the billows of the sea,
Where infidelity is ruin,—want
Of faith, destruction ;—or in death's lone vale,

Where languishes humanity,—where flesh
Sinks unavailing, and all earthly hope
Hath fled the bosom ;—Then, my God, impart
Assurance of thy presence to their soul ;
Fill them with heaven, with Thee ;—nor let them feel
A thought terrific ;—be thyself their thought !
And mingle with each impulse of their heart !

Visit, O Lord, the earth !—It pants and thirsts
For the refreshing, vivifying dew,
The moisture of thy breath of blessing. Stay,
Defer not, Great Jehovah !—Hasten down
In fullest plenitude of mercy, clad
In all-creating love ;—and the wide earth
Replenish with thy glory and display
Of perfect majesty ;—nor let remain
One of thy creatures unconvinced of thee,
To raise again a carnal, sinful Age !

Thus have I sang, Theresa, as thy wish
Directed ; haply, not so much at large ;—

But yet sufficient that thou may'st discern
The vain pretensions, the realities,
The virtues, vices, signs, expectancies,—
The character, the promise of the Age.

THE END.

